

A N  
E S S A Y  
In Favour of the  
Ancient Practice  
Of giving the  
*Eucharist to Children.*

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By the late Reverend and Learned  
Mr. JAMES PEIRCE, of Exon.

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*Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it, Prov. xxii. 6.*

*Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: For of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them, Mark x. 14, 16.*

Et natura tenacissimi sumus eorum quae rudibus annis percipimus: Ut sapor quo nova imbuas, durat: Nec lanarum colores quibus simplex ille candor mutatus est, elui possunt. *Quintil. Instit. Orat. Lib. I. c. 1.*

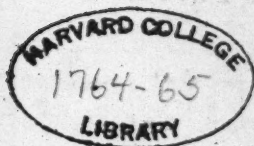
Non desunt hodie viri in ecclesia catholica eruditi, qui hanc vetustam, infantes statim a baptismo communicandi, multarum ecclesiarum, in quibus fuit & Romana ecclesia, consuetudinem, usque adeo reprehendendam non putant, ut multis eam rationibus probent: Dignamque rem esse censeant, quae ad ecclesiae iudicium deferatur. *Cassander de baptismo infantium, Colon. 1563. p. 89.*

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*Society for propagating the Gospel  
in New England and parts adjacent*

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T H E

P R E F A C E.



*I AM sensible how strong the prejudices are, which an essay of this nature has to encounter. The universal practice of these western parts of the world for several ages past, and the prevailing notions which men have imbibed in conformity to that practice, will procure contempt both to the subject and the writer. I have by such apprehensions been discouraged from venturing to say any thing upon this argument, which yet has been for many years very much upon my thoughts. When I first read St. Cyprian, I was exceedingly surprized with the story he tells in his treatise De Lapsis, which the reader will find related in the essay it self. But it very much added to my surprize, when I found St. Austin talk'd of this usage's being an apostolical tradition; and perceived that it still prevailed*

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*universally in the Greek churches to this very day. None of my readers can more condemn this custom as irrational and absurd, than I then did, according to the notions wherein I had been educated. I could not help often inquiring, what should occasion the ancients to bring in a custom, which I was verily persuaded had no manner of foundation. When I had turn'd it a pretty while in my thoughts, I began to perceive there was more reason for it, than I at first imagin'd. But still I could not get rid of my first prejudices; and doubted whether I could be able to say enough to convince any reasonable and inquisitive person, or to give a good account of my self, if I should trouble the world with a discourse upon this subject.*

*About six or seven years ago (as I guess) I began to write somewhat upon it, and went no farther than an introduction, only I cast together a very few hints of arguments which might be alleg'd for it. I had done so little upon the subject, that I had intirely forgot that I had ever writ any thing concerning it, till the paper a good while after came accidentally in my way. Upon the perusal of it I was sensible, I could say a great deal more for the custom. But I was still backward to take the pains to write what was like to be received in the world with so much dislike. I made it frequently the subject of discourse, when I was conversing with ingenious persons, who I apprehended might help me to some light about it. But excepting one or two, who had the hint from me, and fell in with it, the suggestion met with contempt, horror and detestation: An argument for it could hardly have the favour to be heard, but was blown*

*away*



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away with triumph by the objections I have mention'd, and I think answer'd in the third part. What heart then could a man have to write a set discourse, which for the very title was like to be booted out of the world as soon as it appear'd in it? Very lately I set my self thoroughly to examine the matter, that so I might be deliver'd from a perplexing scruple that had long hamper'd me; or else, if the arguments appear'd clear, and prov'd too strong for me to answer, I might propose them to others, and hear what reply they could make to them. I thought a sufficient treatise upon this subject would have lain in a very narrow compass: That part indeed which relates to antiquity I knew might be made large and pompous, but I resolv'd to contrive to leave out all that was not necessary to clear the history of this usage: But I never imagin'd the other parts would have so increas'd on my hands, as I found they did while I was writing. And yet I am far from thinking the subject is exhausted, as 'tis not likely it should in the first essay upon it, and especially when in such an hand. Nay, I doubt not, I might by a further search into the scriptures, have made other discoveries my self for the clearing this matter, or had I been so careful, as I ought, to have taken minutes of all that I have observ'd relating to it, since I first thought of it, I should have been better prepar'd. But as 'tis, it seems plain to me, that the whole current of the scripture is on this side, and that the only arguments for the contrary that carry any degree of plausibleness in them are three of the objections, which, I hope, I have answer'd sufficiently, viz. that infants are not capable  
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of remembring Christ, examining themselves, or discerning the Lord's body. I have taken notice of some other objections, because I would not leave any I knew of unanswered: But they are all of very little moment if compar'd with those three. Whether they do not admit of a much easier solution than those I have alleg'd on the other side, must be left to the reader's judgment.

After all, I desire the reader to look upon this only as an essay, according to the title, propounded to the world by way of inquiry rather, than as a peremptory determination. I declare my self to be still most open to conviction, and ready to receive light from any one who can help me to it. Truth I love; that only I seek, and thankful will I be to either friend or foe for any assistance in the discovery of it.

I have indeavour'd to write with all the plainness I could, and hope the greatest part of the essay will be easy to common readers; but if any find themselves puzzled much with the first part, I would advise them then to pass it over, or at least to read it after the other parts.

In the first part I have had occasion often to mention a very learned and ingenious person, Dr. William Wall; but I hope I have said nothing that will seem to have proceeded from an inclination to oppose him, or from a want of respect to one I so much value, notwithstanding the wide difference between his opinion and mine in several other matters. I knew of no person who had treated this subject so much as he has, and yet with all the candor that

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can be desired. I thought therefore I might much shorten my work, by considering all the difficulties he starts with relation to the antiquity of this usage, and taking for the most part that for granted, which so learned an adversary does allow. And so far am I from being conscious of the least design of disrespect to him, that I declare I am not without hope of his approving my arguments; and there are few, the concurrence of whose judgment in this point I should more value.

I hope the reader will find the whole written in a spirit of meekness, and with that modesty which I am sensible is but decent, in a single person who opposes a notion receiv'd by all near him, whether learned or unlearned.

I profess solemnly, the conviction I have at present of the truth of what I plead for, and the sense I have of the importance of that truth, make me judge it my duty to publish this to the world. I have no design to raise disturbances, or create any new controversies in the church: I heartily bewail those which already trouble it, and, excepting truth and a good conscience, I should count nothing too dear to my self to part with for the ending them. Nor shall my opinion lead me to do any thing to the breach of the peace of the church. If I am in the right, I doubt not others will perceive it, and some learned hand will supply what is wanting in my management of the argument. If the prevailing opinion should make this essay be slighted, without removing



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ving my difficulties ; I shall rest satisfied in having discharg'd a good conscience , and patiently wait till God shall further reveal the truth in this matter to us.

I suppose I may expect an occasion of reviewing what I have written ; which I shall not hastily take, that I may first see all that will be said against me. But as soon as I think I have all, I design, if God give life and health, to defend or retract what I have said. And herein I hope to be wholly guided by a sincere regard to truth , being indifferent on which side of the question I shall find it.

I have only one thing more to add in this preface : That I desire such as think I am mistaken concerning very little children , would yet take occasion from this essay to consider , whether their own arguments will hold against those of six or seven years old. I am the rather encouraged to move this , because I have found several who disagreed with me concerning the former, inclinable enough to fall in with me in the latter.





A N

# ESSAY

In Favour of the

## Ancient Practice

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### *Eucharist to Children.*

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#### INTRODUCTION.

**I**S natural to us to reverence antiquity. Many learned men highly value themselves upon the insight they have into the religion of the ancient heathen nations, though they acknowledge at the same time the falsity and vanity of it. That a veneration for the primitive times of christianity is much more just and reasonable, will, I suppose, be denied by none, who are not utterly unacquainted with them.

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Men

Men are apt to run into extremes in this matter as well as others. Some cry up antiquity as a rule, to the great disparagement of the holy scriptures: others, though few, think it not worth their study. The middle way between both seems to be the most just and prudent. This way I have endeavour'd to take, and if I at any time have been out of it, it has been through mistake and inadvertency. I acknowledge no antiquity is a sufficient warrant for the establishing or reviving any usage, which has no foundation in the holy scriptures, which are the only rule of my faith and practice in matters of religion. But the deference I pay to antiquity is this; that when I meet with any thing that was very anciently and generally practis'd by christians, I am much inclin'd to examine and search whether I can discover any foundation for it in the holy scriptures. If I can discover any thing of this nature, I can't but wish we therein follow'd both the scripture rule, and the example which the primitive christians have set us: But if I can find nothing of it in scripture, I am not, I confess, much inclined to an implicit faith in the most early antiquity, or to conform my practice to theirs. For if there should happen to be a foundation for their notion in the scriptures, which I am not able to discover, my falling in with it will not be an acceptable obedience to God, since I pay a regard therein to fallible, though good, men, and not to the sure revelation he has given us of his mind and will.

The observation I made of the antiquity of this usage of giving the Lord's supper to children led me first to consider this subject, and to inquire whether there was any foundation for it in the scripture. And that I may the more orderly set before my reader the result of my inquiry, and  
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plead for the reviving this ancient practice, I shall divide this *essay* into these four general parts.

The first part gives an *historical account* when the Lord's supper was certainly or probably used in the christian church to be given to children; and upon what occasion that custom came any where to be laid aside.

The second produces such *arguments* as I think the scriptures afford us, to warrant the practice.

The third *indeavours* to answer all the objections I have met with against it.

The fourth represents the *advantages*, which I apprehend the reviving it would be attended with, supposing we have a sufficient warrant in the scripture for it.



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PART



## P A R T I.

*An historical account when the Lord's supper was certainly or probably used in the christian church to be given to children; and upon what occasion that custom came any where to be laid aside.*



IN this part, which relates to the history of this usage, I shall all along have a regard to a very ingenious and learned author, who is well versed in the primitive writers, and has said the most of any man I have met with, to lessen the antiquity and universality of the practice. What he is forced to grant, the reader may depend upon for true, and will therefore be dispatched with the more brevity. But where he has raised objections and difficulties, I hope he will excuse me, if I take the liberty of candidly proposing what I apprehend serves to solve them. He has upon this very argument been more free with Mr. *Daillé*, than I shall be with him: And if I can answer his objections, I shall have a satisfaction in vindicating that incomparable author from the censure he is pleased to pass upon him. I would not be thought hereby to intimate that Mr. *Daillé* approv'd this usage; He was earnest against it; but he repre-

Wall's  
*Hist. of In-*  
*fant Bap-*  
*tism,*  
P. 511,  
512.

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sents the antiquity of it to the best advantage, to convince the papists of the unreasonableness of their pleading as they do from antiquity, when in this instance it was plainly against them.

I think the best way of treating of this matter will be to begin at our own time, and so go backward and trace this usage up as high as we can, and to produce evidence, where 'tis needful as we go along, of the several churches using it. Among other reasons for this retrograde procedure, there is one which I hope will not displease my reader; that by this means this first part will gradually ascend to the second; and the second will begin where the first ends; I mean an inquiry into scripture antiquity, which every christian without doubt must esteem the best.

I shall digest this part into these following remarks.

I. 'Tis well known, that the practice of giving the eucharist to children is *at this day*, and has been for many ages past, used in the *Greek* churches, which are not of the *Roman* communion.

To prove this I might cite many authors who lived in those respective churches of which they give this account: But 'tis needless, since the thing is acknowledg'd by all. I shall therefore content my self with Dr. *Wall's* testimony, who says, "Very near half the christians in the world do *Hist. p. 517.*  
" still continue that practice. The *Greek* church,  
" the *Armenians*, the *Maronites*, the *Cophti*, the  
" *Abassins*, the *Muscovites*; as is related by *Jeremias*, *Brerewood*, *Alvarez*, *Ricaut*, *Heylyn*, &c.  
" and so, for ought I know, do all the rest of the  
" *eastern* christians." Nor do I remember I ever met with any thing that gave me the least reason to suspect the truth of his assertion concerning any



*Hist. ibid.*

of them. As to the first rise and long continuance of this usage among the *Greeks*, the same author makes it to be some time between the year four hundred and one thousand, and says: "That sometime during this space of six hundred years, the *Greek* church, which was then low in the world, took this custom from the *Latin* church, which was more flourishing." So that, according to Dr. *Wall*'s confession, it has been the practice of the *Greek* church for seven or eight hundred, or, if we divide the six hundred years equally, for a thousand years. I shall afterwards prove it to have been older in those churches than he allows, but his own concession is enough to justify this first remark; concerning which I shall say no more, because it admits of no dispute.

II. This custom continued in the *west* amongst the *Bohemian* churches, which kept themselves pure from the *Roman* superstition and idolatry till very near the reformation.

*Aeneas Sylvius*, who was afterwards pope *Pius II.* in a letter writ concerning them in the year 1451, *Epist. cxxx.* tells us, They give the eucharist in both kinds to *Oper. pag. 661.* children. And so settled were they in their persuasion of childrens right to receive the eucharist, that it was not easy for the *Calixtins*, who fell off from their brethren to the church of *Rome*, to part with this custom. This appears by the petition they presented to the council of *Basil* in the year 1438. In the sixth article they thus express themselves: \* "Likewise we intreat, that in consideration

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\* Item supplicamus, quatenus paternitates vestre, considerata magna affectione populi nostri, velint dare nobis desideratam libertatem communicandi parvulos sacra eucharistia. Nam si iste

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“ration of the great affection of our people, you  
“would grant us the liberty we desire, of giving  
“children the holy eucharist; for if that custom  
“should be laid aside, which this kingdom upon  
“pious considerations, and being moved thereto  
“by the writings and examples of great and holy  
“doctors, has received as catholic, and has ac-  
“cordingly used these many years; a great and  
“intolerable scandal will be given the people,  
“nay, their minds would be so disturb’d hereby,  
“that they would become implacable.” And so  
averse were the council to this practice, that they  
would by no means allow it, when they allow’d  
them the receiving under both kinds. I suppose  
the degenerate *Calixtins* might lose this at the  
time of that council, but ’tis not only certain from  
pope *Pius II.* that the faithful *Bobemians* continued  
it afterwards, till within a little more than half a  
century of the reformation, but ’tis probable they  
retained it among them till the reformation it self.  
The *Calixtins* say in their petition, this usage had  
been received among them for many years. And  
it seems probable they received it at their conver-  
sion to christianity about the year nine hundred.  
This was then the practice both of the *Greek* and  
*Latin* churches, and if they receiv’d it not at first,  
or soon after, they could not well have had it at  
all from the *Latins*, with whom in an age or two  
it began to wear out. They held a correspon-  
dence with the *Waldenses*, and might be thought

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to

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iste usus communicandi, quem regnum nostrum, pie motum,  
magnorum sanctorum doctorum scripturis & exemplis inductum,  
ut catholicum suscepit, & a multis annis effectualiter exercuit,  
aboleretur, certe magnum & intolerabile scandalum in populo orie-  
tur, immo animus eorum plurimum ex eo implacabiliter pertur-  
baretur. *Fascic. rerum expet. & fug.* Vol. I. p. 319.

to have receiv'd it from them, if there were any certain evidence of its having been used by them. But I confess I can meet with no ancient accounts of that people, that will inform us what course they took. I should be very glad, if I could join those early famous witnesses against the corruptions of popery, with their brethren the *Bobemians*. But since I cannot bring a good proof of their agreement with them in this particular, I must content my self with the others only : And so this practice comes recommended to us by the example of a brave set of christians, who probably used it for about six hundred years, while they kept themselves undefiled with the superstitions and idolatries of their neighbours all around them, and gave a noble testimony against their corruptions by the grievous sufferings they indured at their hands.

III. The Lord's supper was for several ages together given to infants in the *western* churches ; and was not laid aside in them till the *eleventh* or *twelfth* century, when the grossest corruptions and abuses in this sacrament came in amongst them.

Dr. *Wall* is very frank in acknowledging what I *Hist. p. 517.* have now asserted. He expressly says : " That in  
 " *St. Austin* and *Innocent's* time, it was in the west  
 " parts given to mere infants. And that this  
 " continued from that time for about six hundred  
 " years. — That the *Roman* church about  
 " the year one thousand, entertaining the doctrine of transubstantiation, let fall the custom  
 " of giving the holy elements to infants. And the  
 " other *western* churches mostly following their  
 " example, did the like upon the same account.  
 " But that the *Greeks*, not having the said doctrine, continued, and do still continue, the  
 " custom



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“ custom of communicating infants. ——— And  
“ ’tis probable the *western* [christians] had done *Hist.* p.  
“ the same, had it not been for the doctrine of 518.  
“ transubstantiation coming up in the church of  
“ *Rome.*

This being certain, and so freely granted, I think it needless to multiply the testimonies of the *Latin* writers in this period who mention it. ’Tis evident ’twas then practised in all christian countries here in the west.

I shall therefore only observe to the reader, that when the doctrine of transubstantiation was crept into the church, and occasioned several alterations with reference to this sacrament, yet this practice had been so long received, and settled in the christian church, that ’twas a hard matter presently to root it out; and the elements were given to infants to the beginning of the twelfth century. So that this ancient custom, as well as that of giving the cup to the laity, were gradually laid aside much about the same time, and for the like weighty reasons.

A superstitious conceit concerning the elements had been for a considerable time increasing more and more in the church, which brought in various new rules and alterations. The ancients had in their discourses so magnified the elements used in the Lord’s supper, that people became afraid of receiving them. This gave occasion to *Cbrysofom*, who carried the matter as high as most, to inveigh against such as used to come and receive only at the great festivals. And in the first council of *Toledo*, A. D. 438. they were forced to make this canon: \* “ If any one does not swallow  
“ the

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\* Si quis autem acceptam a sacerdote eucharistiam non sumpserit, velut sacrilegus propellatur. *Concil. Tolet. I. can. 14.*

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“ the eucharist, when he has received it of the  
 “ priest, let him be excommunicated as a sacri-  
 “ legious person.” Afterwards in another coun-  
 cil at the same place, *A. D. 675.* they were forced  
 to add an explication or limitation to that canon.  
 \* “ If any one, through an unavoidable infirmity  
 “ is forced to cast the eucharist after he has re-  
 “ ceived it, he is by no means liable to any eccle-  
 “ siastical censure. In like manner no censure  
 “ shall be passed upon those who do so in their  
 “ infancy, or when by any means they are not  
 “ themselves, and so don’t know what they do.”  
 To prevent this profanation of the elements there  
 was an order made for the receiving them fasting,  
 and not eating in some hours after. And parti-  
 cularly in the case of infants there was this rule  
 prescribed: † “ Care is to be taken concerning  
 “ infants, that they should not without the ut-  
 “ most necessity receive any food, or suck, after  
 “ they are baptized, before they communicate  
 “ in the sacrament of our Lord’s body.” This  
 rule is delivered in a book which *Dr. Cave* supposes  
 to be a work of the eighth century, but which  
 others think was not written before the eleventh.

No doubt transubstantiation carried the super-  
 stitious veneration of the elements to the utmost  
 height ;

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\* Quicumque fidelis inevitabili qualibet infirmitate coactus  
 eucharistiam perceptam rejecerit, in nullo ecclesiasticæ damna-  
 tionis subiaceat. Similiter nec illos cujusquam punitionis censu-  
 ra redarguet, qui talia aut tempore infantiæ faciunt, aut in  
 qualibet mentis alienatione positi, qui quod fecerint ignorare  
 videntur. *Concil. Tolet. XI. c. 11.*

† Illud autem de parvulis providendum est, ne postquam bap-  
 tizati fuerint, ullum cibum accipiant, neque lactentur, sine  
 summa necessitate antequam communicent sacramento corporis  
 Domini. *Ordo Romanus, Tit. de Bapt.*

height ; but yet it could not all at once alter the ancient practice. They entertained a strange fancy, that the eucharistical wine, if received according to the ancient custom, might stick to mens beards, and freeze, or grow four upon them ; and therefore they brought in the custom of sucking the wine out of the eucharistical cup through a quill or pipe. This custom is taken notice of by *Beatus Rhenanus*, who observes that the pope to this day sucks the wine through a golden pipe in that manner \*. And the *Ordo Romanus* which I mentioned a little before speaks of this custom, where the deacon is described as holding the cup and the quill while the Bishop communicates.

They likewise used another fashion at this time,  
which

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\* Porro non possum celare studiosos antiquitatis christianæ, laicos olim canna solitos haurire dominicum sanguinem e calice : quod pridem mihi indicavit *Paulus Volzins*, abbas Hugoniani coenobii, vir pius & literatus, erutum ex libro signorum, qui frequens extat apud Benedictinos. Idem nuper reperit in primis Cartusiorum constitutionibus *Conradus Pellicanus*, homo miræ sanctitatis ac eruditionis, ubi prohibetur ne quicquam preciosorum vasorum possideant præter calicem argenteum, & fistulam, qua laici dominicum exsorbeant sanguinem. Præterea libellus de veteribus thesauris ecclesiæ Moguntiacensis, ab hinc annos quadringentos & eo amplius conscriptus, qui nunc non est ad manum, inter aureos calices ingentis ponderis ansatos, cruces aureas, grues argenteas odorem impositorum in cavo ventre thymiamatum per rostra ac collum mira arte exhalantes juxta aram maximam, vestes sacras intexto auro rigentes, gemmas incomparabiles, & reliqua *κεμήλια* ac donaria archiepiscopalis templi, fistulas quoque recenset argenteas, ni fallor sex, in hunc hauriendi sacrosancti sanguinis usum deputatas, quibus arbitror archiepiscopum olim uti solitum. Siquidem etiamnum pontifex Romanus, quoties publice sacrificat, aureo calamo sugit sanguinem dominicum e calice cum diacono & subdiacono. *Beat. Rhenan. Annot. in Tertulliani librum de corona*, p. m. 860.



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which had anciently been practised in some extraordinary cases; and that seem'd to bid fair for the removing their difficulties; they used in some places to give the bread dipp'd in the wine. But this being disliked as disagreeing with the original institution was forbidden: And 'twas allowed in the beginning of the twelfth century to give the wine only to infants and sick persons. So pope *Paschal II.* who lived at that time, requires the elements to be given distinctly. Having mentioned a passage of *Cyprian*, he adds: \* “Therefore the tradition of our Lord is according to *Cyprian* observ'd in taking our Lord's body and blood; and let not any following an human and novel institution, depart from what our master Christ both commanded and practised. For we know the bread was given of our Lord by it self, and the wine by it self. And we require that custom to be always so observed in the holy church, except in the case of infants, and such as are very weak, and cannot swallow the bread, for whom 'tis sufficient to communicate in the blood.” The custom then was, as we are inform'd by *Hugo de St. Victore*, or an author who lived at that time, and goes under his name, † that the priest dipp'd his

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\* Igitur in sumendo corpore & sanguine domini juxta eundem *Cyprianum* dominica traditio servatur, nec ab eo quod Christus magister & præcepit & gessit, humana & novella institutione discedatur. Novimus enim per se panem, per se vinum ab ipso domino traditum. Quem morem sic semper in sancta ecclesia conservandum docemus atque præcipimus, præter in parvulis, ac omnino infirmis, qui panem absorbere non possunt: quibus fatis communicare in sanguine. *Pasch. Epist.* 32. apud *Binnii Concil.* Tom. VII. p. 53c.

† Pueris recens natis idem sacramentum in specie sanguinis est ministrandum digito sacerdotis, quia tales naturaliter sugere possunt. *Hugo de St. Vict. de Cærem. Eccl.* lib. 3. c. 20.

his finger in the wine, and put it into the child's mouth to suck, for which he gives this reason, because such can naturally suck. He blames \* those who gave them unconsecrated wine instead of the sacrament, which shews they began then to lay aside the practice; and he thinks it were better not to give them any wine, if they could not without danger of a profanation give them that which was consecrated.

From this time, I am apt to think, they began to lay aside the custom of giving the cup to the laity, and any part of the sacrament to children. And I cannot here but take notice of the remark which the editor of the councils has made upon that letter of pope *Paschal*, which I cited but now. † “ That you may rightly understand, says he, “ what is here decreed by the pope against giving “ one element dipp'd in the other, and for giving “ the

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\* Unde ignorantia Presbyterorum adhuc formam retinens, sed non rem, dat eis loco sanguinis vinum; quod penitus super-  
vacuum arbitraret, si sine scandalo simplicium dimitti posset.  
— Si autem in reservando sanguinem Christi, vel ministrando pueris imminet periculum, potius supersedendum videtur.  
*Ibid.*

† Ut accipias bene quæ hic de non porrigenda communione intincta, sed seorsum in specie panis, & specie vini seorsum discernuntur a pontifice, consulendus est tibi Micrologus, cum auctor claruit sub *Gregorio VII.* Iste enim de vitanda intinctione capitulo 26 scripsit ista: *Non est authenticum quod quidam corpus domini intingunt, & intinctum pro complemento communionis populo distribuunt. Nam Ordo Romanus contradicit, &c.* Cum autem nec sic reprehensus pravus subintroductus usus in communione cessaret; Paschalis apostolica auctoritate hunc modum distribuendi prohibuit, & pristinum usum hac epistola decretali revocavit. Sed cum nec sic cessaretur ab usu introducto intinctionis, communionem sub una tantum specie panis frequentare ecclesia postea coepit, & frequentare deinceps merito præcepit.  
*Not. in Pasch. Epistol. Concil. Tom. 7. p. 530.*

“ the communion in both kinds separately, you  
 “ must consult *Micrologus*, the writer of which  
 “ lived under pope *Gregory VII.*” [ *who died,*  
*A. D. 1086.* ] “ For he thus writes against this  
 “ dipping, c. 26. *’Tis not allowed what some pra-*  
 “ *etise, who dip the body of our Lord, and distribute*  
 “ *this to the people as a complete communion. For*  
 “ *the Ordo Romanus is against their doing so, &c.*  
 “ But when this evil custom, which had been  
 “ brought up, did not cease upon this reproof,  
 “ *Paschal* by his apostolical authority forbad this  
 “ way of giving the sacrament, and restor’d the  
 “ ancient custom by this his decretal epistle. But  
 “ when after this, the custom of dipping still con-  
 “ tinued, the church began to practise the com-  
 “ municating under one kind, and justly requir’d  
 “ that to be afterward used.” And when they  
 took away the cup from the laity, they effectual-  
 ly put down infant communion, because they had  
 used for some time to give them the cup only.

And yet there seems not to have been any ex-  
 press decree to lay either of these aside before the  
 council of *Constance*; that council which was held  
*A. D. 1415.* formally decreed\* the laity should  
 receive in one kind only, with an express *non ob-*  
*stante* to our Saviour’s institution. And the coun-  
 cil of *Basil*, which was held soon after, did, as I  
 observ’d before, absolutely refuse to allow the  
*Calixtins* the liberty of giving the communion to  
 infants, when they indulg’d the grown persons the  
 use of the cup. ’Tis very observable, that the  
*Lateran* council which expressly determined † the  
 doctrine of transubstantiation, *A. D. 1215.* seems  
 to

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\* Sessione 13.

† Cap. 1.



to have allow'd infant communion. For when they require persons to confess to a priest once a year at least in order to their coming to the sacrament, they put in this limitation, *when they are come to years of discretion* \*, which certainly must be design'd to distinguish adult from infant communicants, for if infants had been then excluded there would have been no need of that expression at all to clear the matter. So that I think we may say that infants were not in the *Roman* church forbidden to receive the eucharist by any express and formal determination of any of their councils till the xvth century in the council of *Basil*, and that this custom was not abolished by any formal decree, till after they had abolished the custom of giving the sacrament under both kinds. 'Twas brought into disuse by transubstantiation, and the first council that speaks against it, does it only upon occasion of the *Calixtins* desire of continuing it. But the council of *Trent* have treated it with a peculiar air, upon which I think it will not be amiss to make some remarks.

† “ *Lastly*, Say they, the same holy synod teaches, that children which want the use of  
“ rea-

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\* Omnis utriusque sexus fidelis, postquam ad annos discretionis pervenerit, omnia sua solus peccata confiteatur fideliter, saltem semel in anno, proprio sacerdoti, & injunctam sibi poenitentiam studeat pro viribus adimplere, suscipiens reverenter ad minus in pascha eucharistiæ sacramentum, &c. *Concil. Later. sub Innocent. III. cap. 21.*

† Denique eadem sancta synodus docet, parvulos usu rationis carentes nulla obligari necessitate ad sacramentalem eucharistiæ communionem. Siquidem per baptismum lavacrum regenerati & christo incorporati adeptam jam filiorum dei gratiam, in illa ætate amittere non possunt. Neque ideo tamen damnanda est antiquitas, si eum morem in quibusdam locis aliquando servavit.

“ reason, are no ways bound to communicate in  
 “ the eucharist. For being by baptism regene-  
 “ rated, and ingrafted into Christ, they cannot  
 “ at that age lose the grace they have already  
 “ obtain’d, of being the children of God. Ne-  
 “ vertheless the ancients are not therefore to be  
 “ condemned, if for some time and in some pla-  
 “ ces they took that course. For as those most  
 “ holy fathers had a probable reason for their  
 “ practice according to that time, so ’tis with-  
 “ out controversy to be believed, that they did  
 “ not practise this as any way necessary to salva-  
 “ tion.” And therefore after they have thunder-  
 ed out their *anathema’s* against those who were for  
 the laity’s communicating in both kinds, they  
 proceed to denounce one against those who were  
 for infant communion. For ’tis remarkable they  
 treat of these two things together. † “ If any  
 “ one, say they, shall affirm, that ’tis necessary  
 “ for children to communicate in the eucharist,  
 “ before they arrive to years of discretion, let  
 “ him be *anathema*.

I hope I shall, before I finish the first part of  
 this essay, make it appear probable at least, that  
 this synod, notwithstanding their pretended infal-  
 libility, are mistaken in representing this custom  
 as used only for some time, and in some places by  
 the ancients. And I question whether the advoca-  
 tes for the *Trent* doctors will be able to produce  
 as

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vit. Ut enim sanctissimi illi patres sui facti probabilem causam  
 pro illius temporis ratione habuerunt, ita certe eos nulla salutis  
 necessitate id fecisse, sine controversia credendum est. *Synod.*  
*Trident. Sess. XXI. cap. iv.*

† Si quis dixerit, parvulis antequam ad annos discretionem  
 pervenerint, necessariam esse eucharistiæ communionem; ana-  
 thema sit. *Ibid. can. 4.*

as good arguments to prove it not to have been practis'd in any one of the ancient churches, as I think I shall do to prove it to have been the universal custom from the beginning of the christian church. But there is one of their assertions as manifestly false, as any thing can well be; and that is, that the ancients did not practise this as though 'twere necessary to salvation. 'Tis evident pope *Innocent*, and those who alleg'd this custom as an argument against the *Pelagians*, always suppos'd the receiving the Lord's supper was as necessary to salvation as baptism, as I shall have occasion to shew afterwards in this essay. And I wonder what those probable reasons were, which the ancient fathers are here supposed to have had for this practice, which have not as much probability in them still as ever they had; or what there was that made this usage more proper and agreeable in their time, than 'twould be in our own. And certainly it was a piece of impudence worthy of such a cabal, to curse all those who held an opinion which had been for so many ages receiv'd in the ancient church. What respect could they be understood to have for the fathers, who thundered out an *anathema* against those who pleaded for a practice which was confessedly used by many of them?

And is it not with considering persons a matter of great moment, and worthy of much observation, that this practice which had been so long kept up in the church, came not to be laid aside by the *Romanists* themselves, till they had quite changed the nature of the ordinance, and transform'd it into an idol? Will not every prudent man think the better of this usage, when he observes, that the monster of transubstantiation was the only occasion of its being laid aside, and that



it was not disused by the papists, till their corruptions were advanc'd to the utmost ; and that children were then depriv'd of the eucharist, when the laity in general were depriv'd of the half of it ? Certainly if any opinion or practice deserves to be more or less regarded, according to the character of the encouragers or opposers of it ; there is room for a strong prejudice in favour of infant communion, because it was laid aside, and put down by the worst of men for the sake of their infamous superstition and idolatry, and at the same time was stilly pleaded for and defended by almost the only christians who at that time retained the purity of our holy religion.

I cannot but apprehend it to have been a considerable oversight in the first reformers in general, that they seem hardly to have allow'd the least consideration to a custom which was recommended to them by such great authorities. And I cannot but the rather wonder at their omission in this respect, because I observe, that when it pleased God to suffer the idolatrous papists to abrogate it, yet he took care they should in some places leave some footsteps or memorials of it, which might be hints to those who undertook the work of reformation, to inquire into the grounds and reasons of it.

I have observ'd before, that some time after the doctrine of transubstantiation was advanced in the world, they began to give children unconsecrated instead of sacramental wine. And this, though disliked by some, yet continued in some places till the reformation. Thus *Lindanus* bishop of *Ruremond*, who was not born when the reformation first began, tells us, that plain or unconsecrated wine was given in the church of *Dort* to the new baptiz'd infants till his own time. And was not  
this

this an *item* what was the ancient custom, and did it not deserve to be more considered than it was?

IV. Infant communion is as ancient in the *Greek* church as *St. Austin* and *pope Innocent's* days.

The only reason why I make this a distinct remark is, because the ingenious gentleman I mentioned before, makes a difficulty of it. “ *How* *hist. p.*  
“ soon, says he, or how late the custom of infants *16.*  
“ receiving came in, in the *Greek* church, I know  
“ not. I do not remember any one ancient writer  
“ of that part of the world that speaks of it; I  
“ mean of any genuine book: For I know that  
“ a mention of it is got into *Clem. Constitutions.*”  
He therefore conceives it most probable; “ That  
“ sometime during this space of six hundred years”  
[after *St. Austin* and *pope Innocent*] “ the *Greek*  
“ church, which was then low in the world, took  
“ this custom from the *Latin* church, which was  
“ more flourishing.

The mention made of it in our present *Constitutions* is very express. For thus he describes the order in which they used to communicate. \* “ Af-  
“ ter that let the bishop communicate, then the  
“ presbyters and deacons, and subdeacons, and  
“ readers, and singers, and ascetics; and then  
“ of the women the deaconesses, and virgins, and  
“ widows; then *the children*; and then all the  
“ people in order, with modesty and reverence,

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“ and

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\* Καὶ μετὰ τὸτο μετὰ λαμβανέτω ὁ ἐπίσκοπος, ἔπειτα οἱ  
πρεσβύτεροι, καὶ οἱ διάκονοι, καὶ ὑποδιάκονοι, καὶ οἱ ἀναγνώσαι,  
καὶ οἱ ψάλται, καὶ οἱ ἀσκηταί, καὶ ἐν τῇ γυναιξὶν αἱ διακόνισσαι,  
καὶ αἱ παρθένοι, καὶ αἱ χήραι, εἶτα τὰ παῖδια, καὶ τότε πᾶς ὁ  
λαὸς κατὰ τάξιν μετὰ αἰδῶς καὶ εὐλαβείας ἀνευ δορυβίου. *Con-*  
*stit. App. lib. VIII. c. 13. Confer etiam cap. 12.*

*An Essay in Favour of the ancient Practice*

“and without any tumult.” I make no doubt those constitutions have been much interpolated since they were first written; but I cannot think the mention of childrens communicating is not as old as the constitutions themselves. And I much wonder that this passage should fall under suspicion among the learned, even some who would pay the greatest deference to their authority; which certainly must be very small, if men assume a liberty of expunging what they please, as an interpolation, without the warrant of any copy.

But as to the difficulty which is raised by Dr. *Wall*, I hope to give a full and satisfactory answer to it, in these following observations.

1. That the only occasion of St. *Austin* and pope *Innocent*’s mentioning this practice of the christian church, was the *Pelagian* controversy; and had it not been for that, in all likelihood we should not have found such express notice taken of it, as we now meet with in their writings. Now the *Pelagian* controversy was chiefly managed among the *Latins*, and made but little noise among the *Greeks*; and therefore supposing the *Greek* writers said nothing of it, their bare silence would be a very slender evidence of their not having this custom among them. For their silence is very consistent with the supposition of their using it, since the only reason of their silence may be thought to be, their not having the same occasion the *Latins* had to mention it.

2. St. *Austin* was certainly better able, than we are, to judge, whether this was the ordinary custom of the churches of his time, or no: and he has said enough to satisfy us, that it was. It would be very strange, if we should think that we at the distance of near thirteen hundred years should have more certainty what was the practice

of

\*  
aut d  
sto,  
vitan  
p. 18



*of giving the Eucharist to Children.*

21

of the *Greek* churches in *St. Austin's* time, meerly from the negative argument of the *Greek* writers saying nothing for or against the custom, than he could have with all his advantages of reading the writers, and corresponding with the churches of his own time. If any positive proofs could be produced, that this was not the custom of the *Greeks*, I confess they would deserve regard; but since nothing of this nature is pretended, certainly *St. Austin's* authority alone is sufficient to outweigh this sort of negative evidence. And what can be more full and express, than *St. Austin's* testimony in one of his epistles? \* “No one, says  
“ he, who professes himself a christian of the ca-  
“ tholic faith, denies or doubts, that children  
“ without receiving the grace of regeneration in  
“ Christ, and without eating his flesh, and drink-  
“ ing his blood [that is, without baptism and the  
“ Lord's supper] have not life in them, and  
“ therefore are liable to everlasting punishment.”  
Would *Austin*, do we think, ever talk after this rate, unless he knew it to have been the practice of the *eastern* as well as *western* churches, to give the eucharist to children? He could not do it if he had believed they practis'd otherwise, unless he had esteemed them not to be catholic christians, which was far enough from his thoughts. And very remarkable is another passage in *St. Austin* to our purpose, which *Dr. Wall* has taken notice *p. 514.* of, and thus translated:

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“ The

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\* Nullus qui se meminit catholice fidei christianum, negat aut dubitat parvulos, non accepta gratia regenerationis in Christo, sine cibo carnis ejus & sanguinis potu, non habere in se vitam, ac per hoc poenae sempiternae obnoxios. *Epist. CVI.* p. 185.

*An Essay in Favour of the ancient Practice*

\* “ The christians of *Africa* do well call baptism it self, ones salvation ; and the sacrament of Christ’s body, ones life. From whence is this, but as I suppose, from that ancient and apostolical tradition, by which the *churches of Christ do naturally hold*, that without baptism and partaking of the Lord’s table, none can come either to the kingdom of God, or to salvation and eternal life ? For the scripture, as I shewed before, says the same. For what other thing do they hold, that call baptism, salvation, than that which is said ; *He saved us by the washing of regeneration* : And that which *Peter* says ; *The like figure whereunto, even baptism, does now save us ?* And what other thing do they hold, that call the sacrament of the Lord’s table, life, than that which is said, *I am the bread of life, &c.* and, *the bread which I will give, is my flesh, which I will give for the life of*  
“ the

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\* Optime Punici christiani baptismum ipsum nihil aliud quam salutem, & sacramentum corporis Christi, nihil aliud quam vitam vocant. Unde, nisi ex antiqua, ut existimo, & apostolica traditione, qua ecclesie Christi insitum tenent, præter baptismum & participationem Dominicæ mensæ, non solum non ad regnum Dei, sed nec ad salutem & vitam æternam posse quendam hominum pervenire ? Hoc enim & scriptura testatur, secundum ea quæ supra diximus. Nam quid aliud tenent, qui baptismum nomine salutis appellant, nisi quod dictum est, *Salvos nos fecit per lavacrum regenerationis* : Et quod Petrus ait, *Sic & vos simili forma baptismi salvos facit* ? Quid aliud etiam qui sacramentum Dominicæ [mensæ] vitam vocant, nisi quod dictum est : *Ego sum panis vivus, qui de calo descendi, & panis quem ega dedero, caro mea est pro seculi vita* : Et, *Si non manducaveritis carnem filii hominis, & sanguinem biberitis, non habebitis vitam in vobis* ? Si ergo ut tot & tanta divina testimonia concinunt, nec salus, nec vita æterna sine baptismo & corpore & sanguine Domini cuiquam speranda est, frustra sine his promittitur parvulis, *Aug. de peccat. merit. & remis. lib. L. c. 24.*

“ the world : And, *Except you eat the flesh of the*  
 “ *son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in*  
 “ *you ?* If then, as so many divine testimonies do  
 “ agree, neither salvation, nor eternal life is to  
 “ be hoped for by any without baptism, and the  
 “ body and blood of our Lord ; ’tis in vain pro-  
 “ mised to infants without them.” This is with-  
 out doubt a clear evidence that St. *Austin* was  
 satisfied that infant communion was universally  
 received in the catholic church in his time. He  
 would not otherwise have said ; *the churches natu-*  
*rally hold it.* He evidently appears to have judg’d  
 it, as I do, a very ancient practice, and to have  
 had its rise with christianity it self, or else he  
 would not have call’d it an *ancient and apostolical*  
*tradition.* Dr. *Wall*, according to his apparent de-  
 sign of making the least, he thinks he may fairly,  
 of the testimonies alleg’d for the antiquity of this  
 usage, makes this remark upon the passage I have  
 now cited from St. *Austin* : “ In the case of bap-  
 “ tism, St. *Austin*, and those others whom we  
 “ have quoted, do say, There is a tradition from  
 “ the apostles for baptizing infants. But all that  
 “ St. *Austin* says here in the case of the eucharist  
 “ is general ; That there is an apostolical tradi-  
 “ tion, that none that do not receive it can have  
 “ salvation. And that this rule should include  
 “ infants is not said as from the apostles, but is  
 “ only his own consequence drawn from the ge-  
 “ neral rule ; neither do his words import any  
 “ more : In which consequence there may easily  
 “ be a mistake.” But St. *Austin*’s words cannot  
 be thus evaded. His *apostolical tradition* is this,  
 that what our Saviour says, *John* iii. is to be un-  
 derstood of baptism, and that his discourse of the  
*bread of life, of eating the flesh and drinking the blood*  
*of the son of man,* *John* vi. is concerning the eucha-

rist.



rist. And if he be allowed to be in the right concerning this tradition, there can be no mistake in the consequence, That therefore both baptism and the Lord's supper are to be administered to infants.

3. *St. Austin's* assertion, that this was the general practice of the churches in his time, is very much confirmed by the consent of the ancient writers, *Greek* as well as *Latin*, in interpreting our Lord's discourse, *John vi.* concerning the eucharist. This I shall have occasion to mention again.

4. It seems next to a demonstration, that this was the universal practice in *St. Austin's* time, because there was no dispute about it. The *Antipelagians* pleaded strongly against their adversaries, that infants had original sin, from the received custom of the christian church, which believing those texts in the third and sixth chapters of *John* to relate, the one to baptism, the other to the Lord's supper, asserted the absolute necessity of both ordinances to salvation, and accordingly administered both to infants. *St. Austin* in several places triumphs in this argument: And every one must see those texts being understood to speak of the sacraments, and expounded by the practice of the churches, bore very hard upon the *Pelagians*. They made a shift indeed to help themselves a little with reference to that, *John iii.* by a subtle distinction which they devised, according to which they granted unbaptized infants could not obtain the kingdom of God, though they might eternal life: But the other text pinch'd them grievously; for our Saviour evidently speaks of eternal life, as *Austin* argues, where he asserts the absolute necessity of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man, in order to persons obtaining it.  
And

And if infants without the eucharist could not have eternal life, they must according to his way of reasoning, suffer punishment, and consequently they must have original sin. Now, if any of the churches of that time had excluded infants from communion in the Lord's supper, and had received another interpretation of that text which better suited their own practice; who can think the *Pelagians* would not have readily taken that handle, and have raised a controversy about the right infants had to partake of the elements? At least they would have endeavour'd to take off the force of the objection against their doctrine, by alleging, that 'twas uncertain whether their adversaries hit upon the true sense of our Saviour's words, and that christians were not generally agreed about it, but that the *Greek* writers went clear another way in expounding it. But since we never meet with the least hint of any such answer made by them to this grand objection against their scheme; there is good reason to conclude the *Greeks* and *Latins* were in this case agreed, and that it was then the universal practice of the churches to give the elements to infants.

5. I am much mistaken, if there is no mention of this practice to be met with in *Greek* writers, who are as ancient as St. *Austin* and pope *Innocent*. I shall name some who lived in their time.

The first whom I will produce as a witness of this practice, shall be *Theodorus Mopsuestenus*, who lived in St. *Austin*'s time, and as Dr. *Cave* has stated the matter, died two years before him. His testimony is very full; and the more considerable because he was a *Pelagian*, and in that treatise which I refer to, and of which *Photius* has given us an extract, he is stiffly arguing against those in the west, who asserted mens sin was owing to their nature,

ture, and not to their will. And thus he exposes them, and particularly, as 'tis thought, St. *Austin* himself: \* “ A second thing which they say in consequence of the former is, that infants, although but just born, are not free from sin, because nature is now constituted in sin by reason of *Adam's* transgression, and a sinful nature (as they love to speak) is now propagated to all his posterity. And for the confirmation of their opinion they allege, *I was conceived in sins*, and such like places of scripture; and that the holy baptism, and the communion of the undefiled body of our Lord, are for the remission of sins; and that they convey this *when they are administred to infants.*” Now to evade this objection, he does not allege, that infants in the *Greek* churches did not partake of the eucharist (which he would certainly have done, if it had been true) but he coins a strange notion of remission of sins, making it to import a person's being freed from sinning any more, as he says we shall be after the resurrection. And for this *Photius* laughs at him, notwithstanding his approbation of the cause he defended. His remark upon him is much to our purpose. † “ But perhaps he fell  
“ in-

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\* Δεύτερον ἀκόλουθον αὐτοῖς λέγειν, μηδὲ τὰ παῖδια, καὶ ἀρτιγενῆα ἢ, μὴ ἀπαλλάχθαι ἁμαρτίας, ἅτε ἀπὸ τῆ Ἀδὰμ παραβάσεως. τῆ φύσεως ἐν ἁμαρτίαις ὑποστάσης, καὶ εἰς πάν τὸ ἐξ ἐκείνου γένος τῆ ἁμαρτωλῆς (ὡς ἔποιεν αὐ ἐκεῖνοι) φύσεως παρελθονμένης. Φέρειν τε αὐτὰς τὸ ἐν ἁμαρτίαις ἐγγενήθην, καὶ εἰ τι τοιοῦτον, καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ ἅγιον βάπτισμα, καὶ τῆ ἀχρεΐνης σώματος κοινωνίαν, εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν. καὶ τοῖς βεβήκοσιν ὑπερέχοντα ταῦτα, περιχομίζεν, ἐπὶ βεβαίωσιν τῆ οὐκείας νομίσεως. Photii Biblioth. cod. CLXXVII p. 396.

† Τάχα ὃ ἐδ' αὐτοῖς ἐκὼν ἐπὶ τῷτο ἥλθεν· ἀλλ' ἵνα λύσῃ τὴν ἀπορίαν τῶν λεγόντων, διὰ τί τὰ βεβήκοι κοινωνοῦν τῇ ἀχρεΐαν  
†  
μυστη-



“ into this interpretation unwillingly, and only  
 “ to solve the difficulty of those who say, why do  
 “ infants partake of the undefiled mysteries?  
 “ Why are they thought worthy of baptism, un-  
 “ less they also are full of sins, sin being now  
 “ spread through nature? For these are given for  
 “ the remission of sins. But he should have given  
 “ some other solution of this difficulty, as there  
 “ are several other ways of solving it.” Can any  
 one, when he reads this, doubt whether the *Greeks*  
 were for giving children the Lord’s supper?

The second witness I shall bring for this practice  
 in the *Greek church* is *Isidorus Pelusiota*, who lived  
 at the same time. He thus pleads that men should  
 highly honour the priesthood: \* “ Through their  
 “ means we are regenerated, and partake of the  
 “ divine mysteries, without which ’tis not possi-  
 “ ble to partake of the heavenly rewards, ac-  
 “ cording to those certain oracles of the truth  
 “ which says: *Except a man be born of water and*  
 “ *the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God:*  
 “ And, *Except any one eat my flesh and drink my*  
 “ *blood he shall have no part with me.* If then with-  
 “ out

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μυστηρίων; διὰ τί τῷ βαπτίσματος ἀξίεται ἐν μὴ καὶ αὐτὰ γέ-  
 μαι ἁμαρτιῶν, ἐν τῇ φύσει τῇ ἁμαρτίας κατεσπαρμένης· καὶ  
 γὰρ καὶ εἰς ἀφεσιν ταῦτα δίδοται ἁμαρτιῶν· ἀλλ’ ἐχρῆν καὶ τὴν  
 ἀπορίαν πολλὰς ἔχουσιν λύσεων ἀφορμαίς, ἐτέρωθεν ἐπιλύ-  
 σαθαι. Id. p. 400.

\* Δι’ αὐτῆς γὰρ καὶ ἀναγεννώμεθα, καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ μετέχομεν  
 μυστηρίων, ὧν ἄνευ, τοῦ οὐρανόθεν μελαγχρῆν ἔχον οἷον τε γερῶν,  
 κατὰ τοὺς ἀφειδῆς τῇ ἀληθείας χρησμούς, ποτὲ μὴ λέγε-  
 σθαι, Ἐὰν μὴ τις γυνῇ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος ἁγίου, καὶ μὴ εἰσελ-  
 θῇ εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ. Ποτὲ δὲ, Ἐὰν μὴ τις φάγῃ  
 μου τὴν σὰρκα, καὶ πίνῃ μου τὸ αἷμα, οὐκ ἔχει μέρος μετ’ ἐμοῦ  
 εἰ τοίνυν ἄνευ τούτων ἔχον οἷον τε τῇ θείᾳ ἀξιοθῆναι λήξεως,  
 ταῦτα δὲ δι’ ἐδδεδότος ἐτέρου ἢ τῇ ἱερωσύνης ἐπιτελεῖται, πῶς δεῖ  
 τίνα αὐτῆς κατὰ φρονήσιν μὴ εἰς τὰ θεῶν παρενῆσαι, καὶ τὴν  
 αὐτῆς ψυχῆς κατὰ φρονήσιν. Lib. II. Epist. 52.

“ out these 'tis not possible to obtain the divine  
 “ inheritance, and yet these are not performed  
 “ but by the priesthood; how can any one de-  
 “ spise the priesthood, without offering an injury  
 “ to the things that are divine, and without de-  
 “ spising his own soul?” Can any one doubt,  
 whether *Isidorus* was for infants receiving the  
 Lord's supper, when he observes how positive he  
 is in asserting that to be absolutely necessary to  
 salvation? But if this place left the matter doubt-  
 ful, his opinion would be certain from another  
 epistle sent to a noble man, wherein he speaks  
 expressly of the case of infants. He begins thus:  
 \* “ Because your excellency has writ to me, de-  
 “ siring to be informed, for what reason infants,  
 “ who are without sin, should be baptized; I  
 “ thought it necessary to return an answer. Now  
 “ some, who speak below the dignity of the sub-  
 “ ject, say, they are washed from that defilement,  
 “ which is communicated to our nature by rea-  
 “ son of *Adam's* transgression. I believe this is  
 “ done indeed; though it be not all that is done  
 “ (for

\* Ἐπειδὴ γέγραφέα σε ἡ μεγαλόνοια βελομένη μαθεῖν δι-  
 ἡν αἰτίαν τὰ βρέφη ἀναμαρτήσια ὄντα βαπτίζεσθαι· ἀναγκαῖον  
 ᾧδὲν ἀντεπιστάλῃ· Τινὲς μὲν ἐν σμικρολογίαις φασιν, ὅτι  
 τὸν διὰ τὸ ὄφθαλμον τὸ Ἀδάμ διαδοθέντα τῇ φύσει ῥύπον  
 ἀποπλύνονται· Ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ τὰτο μὲν γενέσθαι πιστεύω, καὶ μὴν μό-  
 νον (ἐδὲν γὰρ αὐτὸς τοσούτον ἦν) ἀλλὰ καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ μακρῶν  
 ἡμετέραν ὑπεραίοντα οὖσιν δεδωκὲς χάρισμα· καὶ γὰρ ὅσον  
 ἔχρηξεν ἡ φύσις εἰς τὸ τὴν ἀμαρτίας ἀναίρεσιν ἔλαβε μόνον,  
 ἀλλὰ καὶ θεοῖς ἐκοσμήθη δώροις· καὶ γὰρ καὶ μόνον κολάσεως ἀπλη-  
 λάγη, καὶ πονηρίαν ἀπημυρίατατο πάσαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀνεχρησθή-  
 ανώθεν, παλιγγενεσίας θείας, καὶ λόγον ὑπεραίοντος, ὥστε  
 ἐκ μηχανῆς τινος ὑπνοῦδεῖσθαι, καὶ ἀπελυτρώθῃ, καὶ ἡγιασθῇ,  
 καὶ εἰς ὑποθεσίαν ἡνέχθῃ, καὶ ἐδικαιώθῃ, καὶ ἐγένετο συγκλη-  
 ρονόμῃ τῶ μονογενεῖς, καὶ σύσσωμῃ αὐτῷ διὰ τὸ μετοχῆς τοῦ  
 ἱερῶν μυστηρίων καλέσθαι, καὶ εἰς τὸ σῶμα αὐτὸ τελεῖ, καὶ ὥστε  
 τὸ σῶμα τῇ κεφαλῇ ὥτως αὐτῷ ἡγῶται· Lib. III. Epist. 195.

“ (for this would be no such great matter) but  
 “ many other gifts are bestowed upon us, which  
 “ very much transcend our nature. For our na-  
 “ ture receives not only what it wants for the ta-  
 “ king away sin, but is adorned with divine gifts.  
 “ For 'tis not only freed from punishment, and  
 “ divested of all wickedness ; but 'tis regenerated  
 “ from above, and redeemed, and sanctified, and  
 “ brought into a state of adoption, and justified,  
 “ and made coheir with the only begotten, *and by*  
 “ *a participation of the divine mysteries* is made one  
 “ body with him, and is reckon'd to be his flesh ;  
 “ and is so united to him as the body is to the  
 “ head.” And 'tis evident, he must mean that  
 this *participation of the divine mysteries* followed im-  
 mediately upon their baptism, or otherwise it was  
 nothing to his purpose, nor any answer to the  
 question which was sent to him. And that he  
 would be thus understood, we may see further by  
 what he says in the conclusion of his epistle.  
 \* “ Think not therefore, my good friend, that  
 “ baptism is only to take away sin ; but that it  
 “ procures for us adoption, a relation to God,  
 “ and ten thousand other advantages, such as I  
 “ have mentioned, and such as I have omitted.  
 “ For he that is universal king has not only  
 “ redeemed our nature that was taken captive,  
 “ but has advanced it to the highest pitch of  
 “ honour.

To these let me add a third witness, and that is

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\* Μὴ τοίνυν, ὧ φίλθ, νόμιζε ἁμαρτιῶν μόνον ἀναρξικὸν  
 εἶναι τὸ βάπτισμα, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὑποδεσίας καὶ θείας συγγενείας, καὶ  
 ἄλλων μυρίων ἧς τε λεχθέντων, ἧς τε ὁραλλομένων ἀγα-  
 θῶν ποιητικόν. ὁ γὰρ ἡς ἀπάντων βασιλεὺς, ἐ μόνον ἐλευθε-  
 ράσας αἰχμαλωτευθείσας φύσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς τὴν ἀνωτάτω  
 τιμὴν ἀνήγαγεν. Ibid.



*Theodorit*, who lived about the same time, being a bishop ten years before *St. Austin* died; and what can be more express than his words? † “Not only, says he, do the priests partake of our Lord’s body and blood, but all that have received the holy baptism.” And are not these three witnesses as sufficient in the case of the *Greeks*, as *St. Austin* and pope *Innocent* in the case of the *Latins*? And if other of the *Greek* writers do not so expressly mention this, yet they are never found to say any thing but what is perfectly agreeable to it. How commonly do they join baptism and the Lord’s supper together, and speak of them both as administered to all that were received into the church ||? Who are the *μεμνημένοι*, or initiated, so often mentioned by *Chrysostom*? They are no other than those who did partake of the Lord’s supper; and what other initiation had they than baptism? What *Greek* fathers differ from the *Latins* in the account they give of those they esteemed *the Saints*, or *the faithful*? Or which of them ever excluded baptized infants from that number? When they cried before the administration: *Τὰ ἅγια τοῖς ἁγίοις* did they intend to exclude infants, who being baptiz’d were certainly reckoned among the *ἅγιοι*, or the saints? Whom did they mean when they cried out, \* *Depart ye, that can’t pray*, but those who not being baptiz’d might not

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† Οὐ γὰρ οἱ ἱεράρχηδες μόνοι μετέλαμβάνουσι τῆς δεσποτικῆς σωματικῆς τε καὶ αἵματός, ἀλλὰ πάντες οἱ τελευχνηκότες τῶν ἁγίων βαπτίσματος. In 1 *Regum*. Quæst. 52.

|| *Vid.* Nazian. Orat. XL. p. 660. Chrysost. Homil. XXII. & XXX. in 1 *Cor*.

\* Ἀπέλθετε οἱ μὴ δυνάμενοι δεηθῆναι. Chrysost. Hom. III. in *Eph*.

not be present when they said the Lord's prayer? Did they mean any others hereby, than the catechumens? And were baptiz'd persons reckon'd of that order? I wish, if any one doubts of the practice of the *Greek* church at that time, he would produce some passages from the ancient authors to shew the ground of his doubt. For certainly we may reasonably otherwise imagine, that since they and the *Latins* agreed in so many other things, they did in this also; and that they then practis'd infant communion universally; for the authors I have alleg'd are sufficient to prove this, unless something can be produced as positive evidence to the contrary. I hope I have said enough to confirm this fourth remark, and to make it appear that the *Greek*, as well as the *Latin*, churches used to give the eucharist to children from the beginning of the fifth century. I shall advance a little higher in the next remark.

V. Neither the practice of giving the sacrament to children, nor the doctrine of the necessity of their receiving it, were owing to pope *Innocent*.

This remark is only design'd for the removing another objection of the same learned author.

“ 'Tis true, says he, what Mr. *Daillé* urges; *Hist. p. 114.*

“ *That St. Austin says the same thing*” [viz. with pope *Innocent*] “ *eight or ten times over in several*

“ *places of his books.* And some of his books are

“ *dated a little before this letter of Innocent.* But

“ *though he wrote a great part of his works be-*

“ *fore this Innocent was made bishop of Rome, and*

“ *in them speaks often of infant baptism; yet*

“ *'tis observable, that he never speaks of infants*

“ *communicating till after Innocent had been bi-*

“ *shop*

“shop some time: Which makes me think it  
 “probable, that *Innocent* did first bring up this  
 “doctrine of the necessity of this sacrament to in-  
 “fants. For after *Innocent* had so determin’d, St.  
 “*Austin* oftner quotes him for it than he does any  
 “place of scripture.

Now to take off this prejudice against the practice I am pleading for, I desire the reader to take notice of a few things.

1. There is no reason to think pope *Innocent* ever wrote any thing concerning this matter, before that Letter which Dr. *Wall* mentions, which was sent to the *Milevitan* Synod. And since he owns St. *Austin* speaks of this custom in the works he wrote before *Innocent* sent that letter; I think I have more reason to deny, than he can have to assert, that St. *Austin* received it from that pope. For certainly if one of these must be thought to have received it from the other, the pope is most likely to have received it from the bishop of *Hippo*, since for ought appears to us, the latter did first mention it in his writings. And though ’tis true, St. *Austin* makes much use of his testimony; yet that is no evidence he had it from him. A great deference, as is well known, was then paid to the bishops of *Rome*, not only as that was the imperial city, but as it was thought to have been the seat of two famous apostles, Saint *Peter* and St. *Paul*. And St. *Austin* being very desirous to run down his *Pelagian* adversaries, thought nothing was more like to do it, than the authority of the bishop of that see. And he that looks into St. *Austin* will see, that he designs to lay the greatest stress upon this, when he appeals to his testimony. There are many passages to this purpose in one of his letters, wherein he seems with a kind of pomp to mention the apostolical See.

“Ac-



\* “Accounts were sent, says he, of this matter,  
 “ from the two councils of *Carthage* and *Milevis*,  
 “ to the apostolical see. — We wrote, beside  
 “ those accounts sent from the councils, private  
 “ letters also to pope *Innocent* of blessed memo-  
 “ ry, wherein we treated of this matter more at  
 “ large. To all which he return’d us such an  
 “ answer as was fit, and as became the bishop of  
 “ the apostolical see. — He must dispute  
 “ against the determination of our Lord, —  
 “ and against the authority of the apostolical see,  
 “ which has urged this testimony of the gospel  
 “ when this very business was debated. — If  
 “ they will give way to the apostolical see, or  
 “ rather to the master and lord of the apostles,  
 “ &c.

2. Pope *Innocent* does not mention this as a new thing; and the very way of his speaking of it would make one think he was rather appealing to a received doctrine or practice, than attempting to introduce a new one. When men design to advance a new notion, they use to speak of it with all the clearness they can, and set it off with many words to the best advantage. But nothing of this nature is to be met with in that epistle. *Inno-*  
*cent* brings in the mention of it very accidentally

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\* *Misse sunt itaque de hac re ex duobus conciliis, Carthagi-*  
*nenſi & Milevitano, relationes ad apostolicam ſedem. — Scrip-*  
*ſimus etiam ad beatę memorię papam Innocentium, præter con-*  
*ciliorum relationes, literas familiares, ubi de ipſa cauſa aliquan-*  
*to diutius egimus. Ad omnia nobis ille reſcripſit eodem modo*  
*quo ſas erat atque oportebat apoſtolicę ſedis antiſtitem. — Con-*  
*tra ſententiam Domini diſputabit. — & contra apoſtolicę ſe-*  
*dis auctoritatem, ubi de hac ipſa re cum ageretur, hoc testi-*  
*monium adhibuit evangelicum. — Si autem cedunt ſedi*  
*apoſtolicę, vel potius ipſi magiſtro & domino apoſtolorum, &c.*  
*Auguſt. Epist. CVI.*

and slightly, in order to confute those he wrote against, and just in the same manner as every one will allow he would have done, if the doctrine and practice had certainly been in vogue long before. *Pelagius*, as I observ'd before, contended that unbaptiz'd infants might have eternal life, though they could not obtain the kingdom of God. He was brought indeed himself to anathematize those who asserted this; but 'tis probable he did not do it honestly: However, this was the doctrine of his followers, who declared they would sooner quit *Pelagius* for anathematizing the asserters of it, than they would depart from it. However, by the help of this nice distinction he hoped to get over the objection brought against his notion from our Saviour's words, *John iii.* Now this was the occasion of pope *Innocent's* speaking concerning infant communion, which he does in this manner: \* "As  
 " to what you affirm they declare, that chil-  
 " dren may have the reward of eternal life be-  
 " stowed upon them without the grace of bap-  
 " tism; 'tis very absurd. *For except they eat the*  
 " *flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, they*  
 " *have no life in them.*" So slightly is this menti-  
 oned, that it might seem almost to bear a dispute,  
 whether he spake of the Lord's supper, or no;  
 were it not for the certain knowledge we have of  
 the sense of that age, and for the comment *St. Au-*  
*stin* has given us upon his words. This does not  
 look as though *Innocent* was speaking of a novel  
 pra-

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\* Illud vero quod eos vestra fraternitas asserit prædicare, par-  
 vulos æternæ vitæ præmiis etiam sine baptismatis gratia posse  
 donari, perfatum est. *Nisi enim manducaverint carnem filii*  
*hominis, & biberint sanguinem ejus, non habebunt vitam in se-*  
*met ipsis,* *Innocent. Epist. inter eas August. XCIII.*

practice or doctrine of his own introducing.

3. If pope *Innocent* had first brought in this notion and practice, *Pelagius* and his followers would without all doubt have made heavy complaints against him, and would have earnestly opposed him therein, since this was made use of as the most plausible objection against their darling opinion. But so far are the *Pelagians* from this, that they made not the least dispute of infants right to receive the Lord's supper.

4. St. *Austin's* never mentioning this before the popedom of *Innocent*, can be no evidence that he received it from him. For since the *Pelagian* controversy was the only occasion of *Austin's* ever mentioning it at all; it can be no wonder he said nothing of it before the popedom of *Innocent*, since *Pelagius* did not begin to broach his doctrine, till sometime after he was advanced to the papal chair.

5. If pope *Innocent* had first set this doctrine or practice on foot, he would probably have done it only in the *western* churches; whereas I have shewn the same was received at that time in those of the *east*.

6. 'Twill certainly appear this doctrine and practice were not owing to pope *Innocent*, from what I shall add under the next remark.

VI. The giving the eucharist to infants was the custom in St. *Cyprian's* time.

All that Dr. *Wall* cares to grant here is, that "The people of *Carthage* did then oftentimes *Hist. p. 517*  
"bring their children younger than ordinary to  
"the communion." I shall therefore endeavour to prove, they then brought mere infants to the communion, as well as they did, by his own concession, in St. *Austin's* time. There is a famous



passage in St. Cyprian, which as it exceedingly surprized me, when I first read it, so it was the first occasion of my thinking seriously on this subject. I shall set down his words at length, and endeavour to confirm my remark by some observations upon them; and shall leave it to the reader to make some others, which, though natural enough, I care not to mention. \* “Hear, says “he, what happen’d, my self being present and “a witness thereof. The parents of a little girl “fleeing out of the city, were through their fright “less careful of her, than they ought to have “been, and left her behind at nurse. The nurse “carried her to the magistrates. They brought “her

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\* Praesente ac teste me ipso, accipite quid evenierit. Parentes forte fugientes dum trepidi minus suis consulunt, sub nutricis alimento parvulam filiam reliquerunt, relictam nutrix detulit ad magistratus. Illi ei ad idolum quo populus confluebat, quod carnem necdum posset edere per aetatem, panem mero mixtum, quod tamen ipsum de immolatione pereuntium supererat, tradiderunt. Recepit filiam postmodum mater. Sed facinus puella commissum tam loqui & indicare non potuit, quam nec intelligere prius potuit, nec arcere. Ignorantia igitur obreptum est, ut sacrificantibus nobis eam secum mater inferret. Sed enim puella mixta cum sanctis, precis nostrae & orationis impatiens, nunc ploratu concuti, nunc mentis aestu coepit fluctuabunda jactari, & velut tortore cogente, quibus poterat indiciis conscientiam facti in simplicibus adhuc annis rudis anima fatebatur. Ubi vero solennibus adimpletis calicem diaconus offerre praesentibus coepit, & accipientibus ceteris locus ejus advenit; faciem suam parvula instinctu divinae majestatis avertere, os labiis obturantibus premere, calicem recusare. Perstitit tamen diaconus, & reluctanti licet, de sacramento calicis infudit. Tunc sequitur singultus & vomitus. In corpore atque ore violato eucharistia permanere non potuit. Sanctificatus in domini sanguine potus de pollutis visceribus erupit; tanta est potestas domini, tanta majestas. Secreta tenebrarum sub ejus luce detecta sunt, sacerdotem Dei nec occulta crimina sefellerunt. Hoc circa infantem, quae ad eloquendum alienum circa se crimen necdum habuit aetatem. *Cyprian, de Lapsis. p. 132.*

“ her to an idol, where the people were gather’d  
“ together, and because she was too young to  
“ eat flesh, they gave her some bread crumb’d  
“ into wine, which was left of the sacrifices of  
“ those miserable idolaters. After this the mo-  
“ ther took her home. But the girl could no  
“ more declare or shew the horrid fact, than she  
“ could before understand or hinder it. The  
“ thing being not known, it happen’d the mother  
“ brought her with her, when we were admini-  
“ string the Lord’s supper. The girl being  
“ placed among the saints, was not able to bear  
“ our prayers, but began to cry out bitterly,  
“ and to be grievously tossed through the disor-  
“ der of her mind; and as though an executioner  
“ were racking a confession from her, her igno-  
“ rant soul at that harmless age acknowledg’d, by  
“ all the signs she could, a consciousness of the  
“ fact. The consecration being ended, when the  
“ deacon began to offer the cup to those who  
“ were there, and among the rest her turn came;  
“ she through a divine instinct turn’d away her  
“ face, shut her mouth close, and refus’d the  
“ cup. The deacon persisted in his offer, and  
“ forced some of the sacramental wine into her  
“ mouth, whether she would or no. Hereupon  
“ she fell a sobbing and vomiting. The eucharist  
“ could not continue in a body and a mouth de-  
“ filed with idolatry. The drink sanctified in  
“ the blood of the Lord, forced its way out of  
“ her polluted bowels. So great is the power, so  
“ great the majesty of our Lord. The secret  
“ works of darkness are disclosed by his light,  
“ nor could hidden crimes escape undiscover’d to  
“ God’s priest. This happen’d in the case of an  
“ infant, who was not yet old enough to utter ano-

“ther persons crime with reference to her self.

P. 513.

Thus far *Cyprian*, whose testimony alone would be sufficient, without any comment to confirm my assertion; were it not that Dr. *Wall* has endeavour'd to weaken it by the remark he has made upon it. “This child, says he, was probably “four or five years old. For the heat of the per- “secution was two years before this administering “the sacrament could be, if we reckon the soon- “est. For St. *Cyprian* had been all that while “retir'd out of the city, as appears by bishop “*Pearson's* annals of that time. And the child “may be guessed by the story to have been two “or three years old, when she was carried to the “idol feast.” 'Tis evident this is said with a design to make the difference between the practice in St. *Cyprian's* time, and our own, appear as small as possible. But I shall take the liberty of offering the reader the reasons why I think these guesses don't seem probable.

1. There's no foundation for conjecturing the girl to be two or three years old when she was carried to the idol feast. It should seem she was not then weaned. *Cyprian's* expression rather looks that way: *Sub nutricis alimento parvulam filiam reliquerunt*; that is, the parents left their little daughter not barely *in the keeping of a nurse* (as Dr. *Wall* renders it) but *at nurse*, to signify, I think, the child's sucking her breast. Now if we were to guess at the child's age from our own fashion, this circumstance would hardly allow the girl to have been so old. But it must be own'd their custom seems to have been different from ours, and that anciently they gave children suck much longer than we now ordinarily do. St. *Jerom's* account of the custom of the *Hebrews* is indeed



deed very strange. \* “ When *Isaac*, says he, “ was born, *Ismael* was thirteen years old. And “ after he was weaned, *Ismael* and his mother “ were cast out. The *Hebrews* differ here in their “ opinions, some asserting the fifth, and others “ the twelfth year, was the time of weaning.” He preferred, as he had good reason, the shortest of the two. Others of the ancients speak of about three years as the time children used to suck. Thus the mother in the *Maccabees* is brought in speaking to her seventh son: O my 2 Mac. vii. son! have pity upon me that bare thee nine months in 27. my womb, and gave thee suck three years. Thus *Macrobius* † thinks children become about that age averse to sucking, and are with difficulty kept longer to it. The same seems to be thought by *Galen* ‖ to be a fit time for children to be kept at the breast. Others again represent the ordinary time of childrens sucking to be two years §.

So that 'tis hard to say what their custom was. However, in the case of this girl *Dr. Wall* has made her as old as can well be allowed. But

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\* Quando *Isaac* natus est, tredecim annorum erat *Ismael*. Et post ablactationem ejus, iste cum matre expellitur domo. Inter *Hebræos* autem varia opinio est, asserentibus aliis quinto anno ablactationis tempus statutum, aliis duodecimum annum vendicantibus. *Quest. & tradit. in Genes.* p. m. 139.

† Post quinquies septem [mensēs] incipit lac nutricis horrescere, nisi forte ad patientiam longioris usus continuata consuetudine protrahatur. *In somn. Scip.* p. 28.

‖ Ταῦτα ἐν ἀπαντα περὶ τὸ παιδίον εἰς τρίτον ἔτος ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης γενέσεως ἀξίῳ παραγμυλιεύειν, καὶ περὶ τούτων ἔτι τῆς τρεφέσης ἢ σμικρὰν ποιῶνς ἀρνησίαν, ἐδεσμάτων τε καὶ πομάτων — ὡς αἰεὶ ἐν τῇ κρεῖσσιν τὸ γάλα. *Galen. de Sanitat. tuenda. Lib. I. c. ix. p. 54.*

§ *Avicenna*, qui etiam *Galenum* non de tertio anno completo, sed auspicante loqui existimavit.

there is reason rather to suppose the time the girl sucked was shorter, since she was at nurse abroad: And however long children might use to suck at home, 'tis not unlikely that parental affections might occasion the shortening the time, that she might the sooner come home. And there seems to be one circumstance which very much confirms my opinion, and that is, that the child was too young to eat flesh, and therefore they gave her some bread crumbed in the wine. And certainly children are capable of tasting a little flesh long before they are two or three, nay, and before they are one year old.

2. *Cyprian's* absence from *Carthage* was but a year and an half, according to bishop *Pearson's* account. For he retired in the beginning of the year two hundred and fifty, and returned in *May* two hundred and fifty one.

3. There's no necessity to suppose the girl was carried to the idol feast before *Cyprian's* retirement; it might be only a little before his return. If the heat of the persecution was two years before his return, yet it had continued hot enough afterward to put christians in general into such a fright as *Cyprian* mentions, or else he would not himself have been so long absent from his flock. Besides, this fright of a particular family might not be so much occasion'd by the heat of the persecution in general, as by the intelligence they might have received of some designs laid against themselves in particular.

4. This guess seems hardly to agree with *Cyprian's* account of the child. For had she been four or five years old when brought to the sacrament, he would hardly have represented her as utterly unable to express any of her trouble; nay, 'tis probable he would have mentioned some questions

questions that were put to her, as they easily might be at that age.

5. Let any one judge, whether 'twas likely a christian mother would let her child continue long with such a nurse after her apostacy. Dr. Wall puts the distance of two years between the child's being carried to the idol feast and to the sacrament. And yet it should seem by *Cyprian*, that she was carried to the sacrament presently after she was taken from nurse. And would the christians of that time, who were so careful of the education of their children, suffer them to be to such an age under the care and tuition of an apostate, whom they so greatly abhor'd, or of a professed and zealous heathen? The nurse must have been of this latter sort, if she were not of the former, as 'tis most probable she was.

6. There is another circumstance in the story, which makes it seem very improbable, the child should be so old as is pretended. I think *Cyprian's* account shews plainly, that they gave her only of the cup and not of the bread. And what now could the reason of this be? The primitive bishops did not grudge any of the laity any part of the sacrament. This therefore could be owing to nothing else but to the child's age, by reason of which they could not so easily make her eat the bread, as they could make her take in a little of the wine. But a child of four or five years old, is as capable of eating a piece of bread, as any adult person whatever.

7. I desire it may be observ'd, here is not the least hint given that this was the first time of the child's communicating, but only the first time of her doing it after her having been at the idol feast. There is no intimation of any allowance or order that was given, for the mother's bringing her  
child



child to the sacrament, that had never been there before. Nor can I conceive why she might not have as well been there before, as come then first when she was so utterly void of all understanding, according to *Cyprian's* account of her. And indeed I cannot see what earnings can be made of all these guesses, supposing they were all allowed to be certain truths. For I dare say, those who are against childrens receiving the sacrament, do only insist upon their want of understanding, and their incapacity to remember Christ, &c. Now this was the case of that girl, let her be of what age you please. And therefore I am apt to think she could not be more than between one and two years old, if she were so much. And the mother carried her to the sacrament as soon as she took her home, and might as well have done it before, if she had taken her home sooner.

8. Should all Dr. *Wall's* guesses concerning this girl's age be allowed as just and reasonable, yet there is another passage in the same treatise, which shews that in *Cyprian's* time, mere infants were thought to have a right, and were accordingly admitted to communicate at the Lord's table. Dr. *Wall* has translated the passage, whose translation I shall give without any material alteration. \* "There were also, says he, a great many that thought it not enough to procure their own damnation: The multitude incou-  
"raged

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\* Ac multis proprius interitus satis non fuit; hortamentis mutuis in exitium suum populus impulsus est: Mors invicem lethali poculo propinata est. Ac ne quid deesset ad criminis cumulum, infantes quoque parentum manibus vel impositi vel attracti, amiserunt parvuli, quod in primo statim nativitatis exordio fuerant consecuti. Nonne illi, cum judicii dies venerit,

“raged one another to their destruction: They  
 “drank death to one another, and pledg’d each  
 “other in the poisonous cup. And that nothing  
 “might be wanting to the measure of their wickedness, infants were carried or led by their  
 “parents; and while they were little, *lost that*  
 “*which they had obtained presently after they were*  
 “*born.* Will not they at the day of judgment  
 “say: We did nothing of this; neither did we,  
 “*forfaking the meat and cup of our Lord,* run of our  
 “own accord to the partaking of these profaned elements. ’Twas the apostacy of others ruined  
 “us: We had our parents for our murderers.  
 “’Twas they that renounced for us the church  
 “from being our mother, and God from being  
 “our father; so that while being young and in-  
 “considerate, and not sensible of the greatness of  
 “the crime we were made partakers of the wickedness, we became intrapped by the treachery of others?

Dr. Wall is not treating of infant communion, when he cites this passage; but only urges it against the antipedobaptists. The observation therefore which he makes upon it, and which alone was pertinent to his purpose, is this:  
 “When he says, *the infants lost [or forfeited] that* *ibid.*  
 “*[gift or grace] which they had obtained presently*  
 “*after they were born;* ’tis plain that he means  
 “their baptism, and the benefits thereof.” But  
 then ’tis as plain, he means the Lord’s supper as  
 well

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rit, dicent: Nos nihil fecimus, nec derelicto cibo & poculo domini ad profana contagia sponte properavimus: Perdidit nos aliena perfidia, parentes sensimus parricidas. Illi nobis ecclesiam matrem, illi patrem Deum negaverunt; ut dum parvi & improvidi, & tanti facinoris ignari, per alios ad consortium criminum jungimur, aliena fraude caperemur? *De laps. p. 125.*

well as baptism: And therefore he immediately brings them in mentioning a particular instance of what they had obtained as soon as they were born, and had afterwards lost through the treachery of others; that is *the meat and cup of our Lord*. And when he represents them as pleading in their own behalf that they did not *for sake* these, 'tis clearly enough imply'd that they used to partake of these, before they were perfidiously carried by their parents to the idolatrous sacrifices.

VII. There is no reason to believe the practice of giving the Lord's supper to infants was peculiar to *Carthage* in St. *Cyprian's* time; nor is there any evidence, that it was not then *universally* received in the christian church.

I make this remark, that I may clear the practice I plead for, from the contrary suggestion of *Hist. p. 517.* the same ingenious writer, who says: "That in *Cyprian's* time the people of the church of *Carthage* did oftentimes bring their children younger than ordinary, to the communion:" implying, as I understand him, that *the people of the church of Carthage were singular herein*. Now to evidence, that this practice was not then peculiar to *Carthage*, I would offer these following observations.

1. The same observation I made before concerning pope *Innocent*, may very well be applied to St. *Cyprian*: That the manner in which he speaks of this practice, shows plainly he did not esteem it any peculiarity in himself or his church. In both the passages I have transcribed from him under the former remark, he speaks of it with the greatest simplicity, and uses not the least argument to justify or recommend it, as 'tis natural for a man to do, when he mentions a *nostrum*,  
about



about which he apprehends his neighbours will disagree with him. But the mention he makes of it is perfectly occasional, and by the by, without the least hint of his expecting any one should dislike, or find fault with what he said. So that I can never imagine, that *Cyprian* thought he was speaking of any other than a *generally* received custom. And with the like simplicity and plainness does he elsewhere \* speak of the absolute necessity of receiving the Lord's supper.

2. There is an epistle of *Cyprian* which shews this was the judgment and practice of all the bishops at least, that were in *the same province* with him. One *Fidus* a bishop had in a letter to him moved a doubt; whether infants should be baptiz'd within two or three days after they were born, and whether they ought not rather to be kept back from baptism and the Lord's supper (as I understand him) till the eighth day. He seems not to have question'd their right to both sacraments, when they came to that age, but he thought they had no right before. *Cyprian* in answer to him writes thus: † "As to the case  
" of infants, concerning whom you say, that  
" they ought not to be baptized in two or three  
" days after they are born, and that a regard  
" should

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\* *vid. Testimon. lib. I. c. 22. p. 29. & lib. III. c. 25, 26. p. 72. & De Orat. Dom. p. 246, 247.*

† Quantum vero ad causam infantium pertinet, quos dixisti intra secundum vel tertium diem, quo nati sunt, constitutos, baptizari non oportere, & considerandam esse legem circumcisionis antiquæ, ut intra octavum diem eum qui natus est baptizandum & *sanctificandum* non putares; longe aliud in concilio nostro omnibus visum est. In hoc enim quod tu putabas esse faciendum nemo consensit; sed universi potius judicavimus, nulli hominum nato misericordiam Dei & gratiam denegandam. *Epist. 64. p. 158.*

“ should be paid to the law of the ancient circum-  
 “ sion ; so that you think no one should be bap-  
 “ tiz’d and *sanctified* before he is eight days old ;  
 “ our whole synod was quite of another mind.  
 “ Not a man agreed to your proposal ; but we  
 “ were all of opinion that the mercy and grace  
 “ of God was to be refused to no man born into  
 “ the world.

*Lib. II. c. 4.* Mr. *Daillé* in his excellent treatise of *the right use of the fathers*, alleges this passage, to shew that infant communion was a general corruption in *Cyprian’s* time, and that we are not to look upon their practice as a sufficient warrant for our own. But in citing it he sets down one word differently from what ’tis ordinarily printed, and puts *sacrificandum* instead of *sanctificandum*: And so by *sacrificandum* he understands *communicating*. Dr. *Wall* objects against this reading of Mr. *Daillé*, that *sacrificandum* is not in that sense *latin*. Nor will I undertake for the purity of the expression ; but yet somewhat might be pleaded for such a sense from *Cyprian’s* stile. For he frequently uses another participle of the same verb for those who had communion with the heathen in their sacrifices, and calls them *sacrificati*. And since he often speaks of the eucharist as a sacrifice, *sacrificandus* might as properly signify one who communicated therein, as *sacrificatus* could one that communicated in the idolatrous sacrifices ; unless *Cyprian* be understood to use the verb *sacrificor* as a deponent. I shall have occasion to mention a place or two out of *Varro*, wherein ’tis so used ; but that use is perhaps hardly to be met with in any later authors, and it may be question’d whether *Cyprian* imitates it, and does not rather mean by *sacrificatus* one for whom sacrifice is offer’d. But since I don’t remember any place, wherein he uses this term *sacrificandus*

*Vid. Epist.*  
*LV. p. 106,*  
*108. atq;*  
*alibi pas-*  
*sim.*

*crificandus* for communicating in the Lord's supper, I cannot but agree with Dr. *Wall*, that Mr. *Daille's* edition was herein wrong; and the rather, because that of *Oxford*, as he observes, takes no notice of any various reading in that place. But then whereas Dr. *Wall* makes *sanctified* in this place to be the same as *baptized*, I question whether there is any necessity of allowing that interpretation. I grant indeed that use of the word is, as he urges, very common and usual; but withal it may be observed, that the ancients, whether *Greeks* or *Latins*, speak of the Lord's supper in the same manner. Thus *Clement* of *Alexandria*: \* "They who receive the eucharist believing, are sanctified both in body and soul." In like manner *Origen* calls the eucharistical bread † "loaves, which are by prayer made a body that is holy, and sanctifies those who use it with a good design." In like manner *Cyril* of *Jerusalem*: || "Under the new law, the heavenly bread, and the cup of salvation sanctify the soul and body." Thus likewise *Macarius*, the archbishop of *Antioch*, in the confession of his faith that was read in the sixth general synod, or the third at *Constantinople*: § "Thus we approach to the elements, and

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\* Ἡ [δι' ἁγιασίας] οἱ καὶ τὰ πρὸς τὴν μετὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν ἀγιάζονται καὶ σῶμα καὶ ψυχὴν. Clem. Alex. *Pædag.* Lib. II. c. 2.

† Ἄρτοι ἐδίδου, σῶμα γενομένης διὰ τῆς εὐχλῆς ἁγίου καὶ ἀγιάζον τὰς μετὰ ὑγίης προθέσεως αὐτῶν χρωμένους. Contra Cels. Lib. VIII. p. 399.

|| Ἐν τῇ καινῇ διαθήκῃ ἅλθ' ἐράνιθ, καὶ πόσειον σωτηρίου ψυχὴν καὶ σῶμα ἀγιάζονται. Cyril. *Cathes. Mystag.* IV. p. 293.

§ Περίεργον δ' ἔτω τῆς μουσικῆς ἀλεγγίαις, καὶ ἀγιάζοντα μέτοχοι τῆς ἁγίας σαρκὸς, καὶ τῆς τιμῆς αἵματός τῶν πάντων ἡμῶν σωτηρίας. Sext. Synod. Constantinop. Act. 8<sup>va</sup>. *Concil.* Tom. 3. p. 99.



“ and are sanctified, being partakers of the holy  
 “ flesh, and the precious blood of him who is the  
 “ Saviour of us all.” And for this reason per-  
 haps, that part of the temple where the Lord’s  
 supper was administred is sometimes call’d *ἀγίασμα*.  
 That *Cyprian* expresses himself to the same pur-  
 pose, we may see by this passage: \* “ And there-  
 “ fore we pray, that our bread, that is, Christ  
 “ [in the eucharist] may be daily given us, that  
 “ so we who abide and live in Christ, may not  
 “ depart from his sanctification and his body.

But waving all arguments from that passage in  
*Cyprian*, whether we read *sacrificandum* or *sanctifi-*  
*candum*; there is another place in the same epistle,  
 which shews plainly that *Fidus*’s doubt, and the  
 synod’s determination related as well to the eucha-  
 rist as to baptism. *Fidus* had objected, that an  
 infant was not sweet before he was eight days  
 old, insomuch that every one had an aversion to  
 the kissing such till that time. The reason of his  
 mentioning this I take to have been, because as  
 baptized infants were immediately received to the  
 Lord’s supper, so there was a necessity of their  
 receiving the kiss of peace or charity at it. And  
 so it appears by the answer *Cyprian* gives to *Fi-*  
*dus*. † “ For whereas you say an infant is not  
 “ clean in some days after his birth, in so much  
 “ that we all of us loath to kiss him, we do not  
 “ think

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\* Et ideo panem nostrum, *i. e.* Christum dari nobis quotidie  
 petimus, ut qui in Christo manemus & vivimus, a sanctificati-  
 one ejus & corpore non recedamus. *De Orat. Dom.* p. 147.

† Nam & quod vestigium infantis in primis partus sui diebus  
 constituti, mundum non esse dixisti, quod unusquisque nostrum  
 adhuc horreat exosculari, nec hoc putamus ad cælestem grati-  
 am dandam impedimento esse oportere; scriptum est enim:  
 Omnia

“ think this ought to be any hindrance to our im-  
 “ parting the heavenly gift ;” for ’tis written :  
 “ *To the clean all things are clean.* Nor should any  
 “ of us loath what God has vouchsafed to make.  
 “ For though an infant is but just born, yet he is  
 “ in no such case, as that any of us should loath  
 “ to kiss him with the kiss of charity.” I am De Sa-  
 sensible *Bellarmin* reckons this giving the kiss as <sup>cram. Bap.</sup>  
 one of the ceremonies that followed baptism : And <sup>lib. I. c. 27.</sup>  
*Dr. Wall* tells us : “ That it was the custom of <sup>Hist. p. 43.</sup>  
 “ those times and places, to give the new bapti-  
 “ zed person, whether infant or adult, the kiss  
 “ of peace.” The same is pretended likewise by  
*Cotelerius*. *Bellarmin* alleges only this epistle of <sup>Not. in A-</sup>  
*Cyprian* for the proof of his assertion ; and *Cotele-  
*rius* adds another of *Chrysostom* : But both these <sup>post. Con-</sup>  
 are easy to be accounted for by this one observa- <sup>stit. lib. II.</sup>  
 tion ; that anciently all baptized persons, whe- <sup>c. 57.</sup>  
 ther infants or adult, used immediately to be ad-  
 mitted to the Lord’s supper. And I question ve-  
 ry much, whether any testimony can be produced  
 from the ancients, to prove they used to kiss reli-  
 giously the baptized person before the communion.  
 The ancient authors, who mention the ceremonies  
 of baptism, such as *Tertullian*, *Jerom*, the pre-  
 tended *Dionysius*, and several others, never take  
 any notice hereof. And if this was the ancient  
 practice, ’tis strange to me it should have been  
 lost at the time when the *apostolical constitutions* were  
 written, in which we find not any mention made  
 of it. Besides, since *Dr. Wall* will not allow of*

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our

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Omnia munda sunt mundis. Nec aliquis nostrum id debet hor-  
 rere, quod Deus dignatus est facere. Nam etsi infans adhuc a  
 partu novus est, non ita est tamen, ut quisquam illum in gratia  
 danda atque in pace facienda horrere debeat osculari. *Ibid.*  
 p. 160. †

our explaining the custom of the church in *Cyprian's* time in the matter of infant communion, by what we meet with in the days of *Austin*; there is no great reason to allow him to explain the ceremonies and usages of baptism from as distant ages, supposing any clear testimonies of giving the kiss of peace on that occasion could, as they really cannot, be produced from them.

I might here further allege another place in *St. Cyprian* to prove, he thought all baptized persons ought immediately to receive the Lord's supper. His words may be thus render'd:  
 \* " 'Tis necessary that he that is baptized should  
 " be also anointed, that having received the  
 " chrism, that is, the unction, he may be the  
 " anointed of God, and have the grace of Christ  
 " in him. Moreover, the eucharist is the oil  
 " that is sanctified on the altar, wherewith the  
 " baptized are anointed." Thus the bishop of *Oxford* understands the place, and when 'tis so taken 'tis home to my purpose; and especially considering that the epistle out of which 'tis taken is a synodical epistle. The like necessity of baptized persons receiving the eucharist might be thought to be requir'd afterwards by one of the ancient councils, if we might be allowed to explain their words in the same manner the learned bishop does the words of *Cyprian*. † " The baptized, say they, ought after baptism to be  
 " anointed

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\* Ungi quoque necesse est eum, qui baptizatus sit, ut accepto chrismate, *i. e.* unctione, esse unctus Dei, & habere in se gratiam Christi possit. Porro autem eucharistia est unde baptizati unguuntur, oleum in altari sanctificatum. *Epist.* 70. p. 190.

† "Οἱ δὲ τοὺς βαπτιζομένους μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα χεῖρας χεῖρας ἐπεργάζω, καὶ μετ' οὗτος ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Χριστοῦ. *Concil. Laodic. Can. XLVIII.*



“ anointed with the heavenly chrism, and to be  
“ made partakers of the kingdom of Christ.”  
But I confess the place in *Cyprian* is too obscure  
and doubtful for me to lay any very great stress  
upon it ; though I don’t see but that the bishop’s  
interpretation is as just as any that is pretended.

3. I cannot believe this custom was then peculiar to *Carthage*, because we find not that it was the occasion of any debate or contest between *Cyprian* and any of his cotemporaries. Though the primitive christians are famous for their piety ; yet it must be owned, they were men of like passions with those who came after them. They many times appear’d very stiff and positive in maintaining their peculiar opinions, and were very jealous of those who acted contrary to their schemes. *Cyprian* indeed manifested an extraordinary christian temper, in the dispute about baptizing those who had been before baptized among the heretics : And yet we see to what a height that controversy came, notwithstanding his moderation. And indeed I am not now so much concern’d to make any remarks upon the temper of *Cyprian*, as upon that of his cotemporaries ; I mean particularly pope *Stephen* and his colleagues, who join’d with him in excommunicating St. *Cyprian*, and the other bishops who pleaded earnestly for re-baptizing those who had been baptiz’d by heretics. The difference between them upon that head does not seem greater, or of more importance, than this (if there had been any) would have been, about giving the eucharist to children. How then can it be thought, that if pope *Stephen* and his colleagues, had not practis’d infant communion as well as *Cyprian*, they would not have made this an objection against him, in the controversy they had with him ; and alleg’d this as one article

for which they excommunicated him? If they had differ'd in their opinion and practice in this as well as the other affair, why should not infant communion have been as offensive to the one party as rebaptization?

I cannot therefore but reckon this a full evidence, that infant communion was at that time practis'd in the church of *Rome*. And from their making no stir with any of their neighbours about it, we may probably enough infer, 'twas generally received in the churches of that age. The church of *Rome* was then become very pragmatical, as we may see by this second instance of their excommunicating whole churches, for differing from them. And as their not being offended with *Cyprian* for this practice, is an argument they used it themselves; so their not troubling or excommunicating the *eastern*, or any other churches for not using it, is to me a probable evidence they all of them used it, at least for ought pope *Stephen* knew to the contrary.

4. That the practice of that age was very different from ours, and might probably enough be the same with *Cyprian's*, may be gather'd from an epistle of *Dionysius* of *Alexandria*, a cotemporary of *Cyprian*. The account we have of it, is preserv'd by *Eusebius*, and in it we have this story: One *Serapion*, an old man of *Alexandria*, had sacrificed in the time of persecution, for which he was excommunicated. The intreaties he made to be restored to the communion of the church, did not prevail in the time of his health; but being at the point of death, he lay speechless and senseless three days, and on the fourth he recover'd a little strength, and sent a little boy, who was his grandson, to call one of the presbyters of the church to release him. It being night, the presbyter,

H. E. lib.  
VI. c. 44.

byter, who happen'd to be sick, could not come to him himself; but sent some of the eucharist to him by the boy, ordering him to moisten it with water (as the translator renders it; I rather think, with some of the sacramental wine) and so to give it him: The boy did so, and instantly the old man departed. All that I bring this for, is to shew that persons used then to communicate very young. For I take this to be an evidence the boy was in communion, and used to receive the Lord's supper. Otherwise the presbyter would never have trusted him to carry the elements; as I suppose every one will allow, who knows any thing of the care and industry with which the ancients used to conceal these christian mysteries from all that did not receive them. This is evident from several places in *Tertullian*, who lived before that time. I can't indeed say how old the boy was, but it seems evident, he was very young, because *Dionysius* terms him not only *παῖς* but *παιδάριον*. I am sensible we are not to examine his expression by the nice distinction which *Hippocrates* makes of the seven ages of mankind, according to whom a child is *παιδίον* to seven years old, after that to fourteen *παῖς*. But I think we can hardly suppose the boy to have been much above eight or ten years old. And this shews, that at *Alexandria* they gave the eucharist to children, if they did not to mere infants, and consequently that their method was at least vastly different from that of our time.

VIII. 'Tis highly probable this had been the practice of the christian church even from the apostles days.

The reader will be the more inclined to believe this assertion, if upon examination he shall per-



ceive any solidity in those grounds I shall produce presently from the holy scriptures for this practice. But I now only consider the matter according to what appears from ecclesiastical writers. Now here I own we have not, as far as I know, any express mention of this practice in the writings of the primitive christians before St. *Cyprian*. And yet I think it probable that it had obtain'd from the beginning of the christian church. The reader may judge of my opinion, when he has perused the following observations, which I would make concerning this period.

1. 'Tis easy to account for our not meeting with any express mention of this practice in the writers who lived before *Cyprian*, even supposing it to have been then received. The writers between the apostles and *Cyprian's* time are few: Their writings are very much in their own defense, either against the *Gentiles*, the *Jews*, or *Heretics*; none of which occasions would lead them to speak of this subject, unless the heretics had raised any dispute about it, or about somewhat that might have been affected by it, neither of which appears to be true. As to the other treatises or letters of those authors which relate to christian piety, they had no great occasion of mentioning this custom in them. For if we suppose this to have been the general practice at that time, there would be little need to exhort parents to bring their children sometimes to church, that they might receive the Lord's supper. Settled, well received practices don't need to be much spoken of or urged. Thus we have fewer exhortations to frequent communion in the most ancient times, when it was universally practis'd, than we have in the fourth and fifth centuries, when christians became remiss in that duty, and many used  
to

to communicate only on the great holy days, and some would stay at the administration without communicating, which customs St. *Chrysostom* does *vid. Hom.* sometimes severely inveigh against. Again, the *III. in Ephes.* ancient writers had no occasion to mention this in their exhortations. For there was no room for their directing any exhortations to the young communicants and members of their churches, till they came to the use of their reason and understanding; and when they were so, the same exhortations and arguments that suited others, would them also.

I desire the reader would a little reflect upon what I have cited from St. *Cyprian*, and take notice how very accidental his first mentioning this custom was. He to represent to the people the great danger of communicating in idolatrous sacrifices, relates a story concerning a little girl that had been carried to an idol feast, and was afterwards brought to the Lord's table, where she was not able to communicate by reason of her having been before defiled with idolatry. Had it not been for this story, which happen'd a little before, and without doubt greatly affected *Cyprian*, and was much to his purpose; and for the whimsical, superstitious conceit of one *Fidus*, who would needs defer baptism till children were eight days old, because that was the age fixed of old for circumcising children, and because he thought others would be as squeamish as himself, and would loath to kiss children if they were brought to the Lord's supper before that age, as they would be if they were baptized before it; had it not been, I say, for these occasions, we should probably have had no clear and express mention of this practice before the beginning of the fifth century: And it may be we are intirely beholden to the *Pelagian* controversy, for what we meet with then concerning it.

It deserves also to be observed, that there is much the same space of time between *St. John*, the last of the apostles, and *Cyprian*, that there is between *Cyprian* and pope *Innocent*; each being about an hundred and fifty years. And since this practice was certainly continued during the latter period, though we find not any express mention of it made therein; why should it be thought unreasonable to suppose the same concerning the former period, which is much of the same length?

2. I must here remind the reader of the manner in which *St. Cyprian* speaks of this custom; which I think plainly argues it not to have been any novel thing, brought in by himself, or in his own time, but to have been a received and settled usage of the church.

3. I may here urge, that we have no account of the rise of this custom. No one who pretends, it was not derived from the apostles, and constantly practis'd in the succeeding times, is able to give us any probable account of the time when, or the occasion upon which, it began.

4. We never hear of any contest or dispute that was occasion'd by this practice. And yet had it not been received from the apostles, one would think, such a vast innovation, as this would have been, must of necessity have raised some grievous quarrel.

I grant these two considerations are not alone satisfactory in any case; but when they are join'd with others, they must be allow'd to have some weight.

5. As there is no express mention made of this usage before *Cyprian's* time, so nor is there, as far as I can find, any thing mentioned before his time, from which it can be inferr'd, that it was not then used. It sometimes so happens, that the doctrines and practices of one age are proved novel by their being



ing confronted by those of a former. But nothing of this nature can be alleg'd in the present case. I was never yet so happy as to meet with any thing in the primitive writers before *Cyprian*, from which it could with any fairness or probability be argued not to have been the practice of their time.

6. The very silence of antiquity is a strong argument, they admitted infants to the Lord's supper, as well as to baptism. I do not expect this argument should be of any force but only with those who believe that infants ought to be baptiz'd, and were so in the most primitive ages of the christian church. As to the *Antipedobaptists*, I own this argument is of no strength at all; but they will be able easily enough to answer it according to their principles. But I desire all that are of the same persuasion with my self, concerning the ancient practice of baptizing infants, to consider seriously, how they can account for it, that there should be nothing found in the writings of the ancients like to the stile and language of the moderns, if the custom of both as to infant communion were the same. How common is the distinction among us of adult and infant communion! Why is no such distinction, or any thing tantamount, to be met with in the ancients, except it be, that there was with them no difference between these two, but the communion of the adult and infants was the same? How common is it with us to urge such as were baptized in their infancy, to renew their baptismal covenant, when they are grown up, and to think of coming and doing it at the Lord's table! Why are there no footsteps of any such exhortations in the ancient writers, unless it be, that in their time there was no manner of need of them, because the vows of  
such

such were renewed immediately after baptism, and continually from time to time at the Lord's table? The primitive christians had a very exact order, and settled rules which they observed in all manner of ordinary cases at least: They had rules for the managing catechumens, and all sorts of offenders, as idolaters, heretics, and schismatics; for the dealing with penitents, and receiving them again to the communion of the church; they appointed a set time for persons to continue in the rank of penitents, which was longer or shorter according to the nature of their offences. How comes it then to pass, that not the least syllable is to be met with in any of them, of the rule or order they observed, when persons passed from a state of infant communion to that of the adult? Or why have we no where any hint at what age, or what degree of understanding they arrived, when they were to be admitted to the communion of the adult? We find they used to pray for the catechumens, the penitents, and the faithful, which last signify those who used to communicate at the Lord's table. And why do we never hear of their praying distinctly for their baptized infants; except it be because they always were reckon'd a part of the faithful, and included in the prayers made for them, and consequently used to receive the sacrament? How common is it with us, for such as were baptized in their infancy to be catechumens, who by that kind of instruction are training up and preparing for the Lord's supper! Indeed we have hardly now any other catechumens at all. But who ever heard of a baptized catechumen in the primitive church? Certainly whoever believes the ancients used to baptize infants, if he will impartially and candidly inquire after the reason of this silence of antiquity, with  
rela-

relation to such things as cannot but be frequently mentioned by those who have laid aside infant communion, must acknowledge, that it makes it very probable that infant communion was practis'd by them.

7. Some received notions and practices of the ancients relating to the Lord's supper, may well incline us to think they used in their time to give it to infants. Bishop *Burnet* says: "'Tis not to be denied, but that very early both *Justin Martyr* and *Irenæus* thought, that there was such a sanctification of the elements, that there was a divine virtue in them." I shall here present the reader with a passage or two, that will shew that *Irenæus* particularly reckon'd there was such a virtue in the elements themselves as to render our bodies incorruptible; whence he argues that the bodies which are nourished by them must rise again. And since he asserts it in two several places, we have the more reason to look upon it as his settled judgment; and the rather, because he makes use of this as an argument to confute those who denied the resurrection of the body. \* "How, says he, do they say, that the flesh turns to corruption and does not partake of life,

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\* Πῶς τὸ σῶμα λέγουσιν εἰς φθορὰν χωρεῖν, καὶ μὴ μέλειεν τὸ ζῶν, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ τρεφόμενον; ἢ ἐν τῇ γνώμῃ ἀλλάξαίτωσαν, ἢ τὸ προσφέρειν τὰ εἰρημένα φρασεύωσαν. Ἡμεῖς δὲ σύμφωνοι τῇ γνώμῃ τῇ εὐχαριστίᾳ, καὶ ἡ δι' εὐχαριστίαν βεβαιῶσι τὴν γνώμην. Προσφέροντες αὐτῷ τὰ ἴδια, ἐμμελῶς κοινωνίαν καὶ ἐνωσιν ἀπαγγέλλοντες σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος. Ὡς γὰρ ἀπὸ γῆς ἄρτος προσλαμβάνοντες καὶ ἐπίκλησιν τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἐκείνῳ κοινὸς ἄρτος ἐστίν, ἀλλ' δι' εὐχαριστίαν, ἐκ δύο πραγμάτων συνεστηκυῖα, ἐπὶ γῆς τε καὶ ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ τὰ σώματα ἡμεῶν μεταλαμβάνοντα τὴν δι' εὐχαριστίαν, μηκέτι ἢ φάρμακα, καὶ ἐλπίδα τὴν εἰς αἰῶνας ἀναστάσεως ἔχοντα. *Irenæus, Lib. IV, c. 34. p. 327.*



“ life, since ’tis nourished by the body and blood  
 “ of our Lord? Let them therefore either alter  
 “ their opinion, or forbear to offer these things.  
 “ But our opinion is agreeable to the eucharist,  
 “ and the eucharist confirms our opinion. But  
 “ we offer to him the things that are his own,  
 “ harmoniously declaring the communication and  
 “ union between our flesh and the spirit. For as  
 “ bread which comes out of the earth, after the  
 “ consecration prayer, is no longer common  
 “ bread, but the eucharist, consisting of two  
 “ things, the one earthly, the other heavenly ;  
 “ so our bodies having received the eucharist are  
 “ no longer corruptible, having the hope of a  
 “ resurrection to eternal life.” The other pas-  
 sage is this : \* “ As the wood of the vine, being  
 “ turn’d down into the earth, brings forth fruit  
 “ in his time, and a grain of corn falling into  
 “ the earth, and being dissolved is raised ma-  
 “ nifold by the spirit of God, who contains all  
 “ things; and these things, through the wisdom  
 “ of God, come to be of use to man, and recei-  
 “ ving the word of God, are made the eucharist,  
 “ that is the body and blood of Christ : So our  
 “ bodies being nourish’d thereby, and being laid  
 “ in the earth, and dissolv’d there, shall arise in  
 “ their

\* Καὶ ὅντιν ἐκ τούτων τὸ ξύλον τὸ ἀμπέλου κλιθεὶς εἰς τὴν γῆν  
 πρὸ ἰδίου καιρῷ ἐκαρποφόρησε, καὶ ὁ κόκκος τῶ σίτου πεσὼν εἰς τὴν  
 γῆν, καὶ διαλυθεὶς, πολλοὺς ἐγένεθ' διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ  
 Θεοῦ, τὰ συνέχοντες τὰ πάντα· ἔπειτα δὲ διὰ τὴν σοφίαν τοῦ  
 Θεοῦ εἰς χρῆσιν ἐλθόντα ἀνθρώπων, καὶ περιλαμβανόμενα τὸν  
 λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ, δι' ἡμετέραν γίνεται, ὅτι σῶμα καὶ αἷμα τοῦ  
 Χριστοῦ ἕως καὶ τὰ ἡμέτερα σώματα ἐκ αὐτῆς τρεφόμενα, καὶ τε-  
 θέντα εἰς τὴν γῆν, καὶ διαλυθέντα ἐν αὐτῇ ἀναστήσονται ἐν ἰδίῳ  
 καιρῷ, τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸ ἐγερσιν αὐτοῖς χαριζομένων εἰς  
 δόξαν Θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς. Id. Lib. V. c. 2. p. 399.

“ their proper time, the word of God bestowing  
 “ a resurrection upon them to the glory of God,  
 “ even the Father.”

Let me here add, that this notion is delivered by one who is reckon'd much ancients than *Irenæus*, even by *Ignatius*. I might here allege what we meet with in the shorter epistle to the church of *Smyrna*; wherein speaking of the heretics, he says: \* “ They abstain from the eucharist and prayer, because they don't own the eucharist to be the flesh of our saviour Jesus Christ, that suffered for our sins, and which the father in his goodness raised from the dead. They therefore who speak against the gift of God, die in their contentions: But it were better for them to love it, that they might rise again.” But because this passage is left out in the larger epistles, and I resolve to forbear meddling here with the controversy, which set is the more ancient, I will mention another wherein they both agree to my purpose, and there is very little variation of the expression. † “ Breaking one bread, which is the medicine of immortality, an antidote that we may not die, but live in Jesus Christ for ever.

The use I make of these passages is this: That since they had a notion at that time, that the eucha-

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\* Εὐχαριστίας καὶ προσευχῆς ἀπέχονται, διὰ τὸ μὴ ὁμολογεῖν τὴν εὐχαριστίαν σάρκα εἶναι τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν παθόντα, ἢν τῇ χρηστότητι ὁ πατὴρ ἡγάγειν. Οἱ δὲ ἀντιλέγοντες τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ, συζητῶντες ἀποθνήσκουσιν· συνέφερον δὲ αὐτοῖς ἀγαπᾶν ἵνα καὶ ἀναστῶσιν. *Ignat. ad Smyrnæos. deff. 7.*

† Ἐνα ἄρτον κλάωμεν ὃς ἐστὶ φάρμακον ἀθανασίας, ἀντίδοτον τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν, ἀλλὰ ζῆναι ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ διὰ παντός. *Ad Ephes. deff. 10.*

eucharistical elements had such a kind of virtue in them, as to render the body incorruptible, that is to be such a vivifying principle as not to suffer the body always to remain in a state of death and corruption; 'tis very probable the affection and love they bore to their children would incline them to give them the elements, that they might by this means secure to them such a resurrection in case they should die in their infancy. I am not at all concern'd to examine how just or true this notion of *Ireneus* and *Ignatius* was; 'tis sufficient for my purpose, that it manifestly suits with the practice I plead for, and could have been hardly entertain'd by them, unless that practice had prevail'd in their time.

But there is another opinion, which was generally received among them, and which every one will expect I should take notice of, it being so much to my purpose; and that is, that our Lord's discourse, *John vi.* is to be understood of the eucharist. I can't find that any of them explain the *eating the bread of life*, the *eating Christ*, or the *eating his flesh and blood*, otherwise than *St. Cyprian*, and those who came after him did, concerning the Lord's supper. This is, I think, generally granted by the learned to have been their notion. Let me here set down what is said by a late celebrated author on this occasion. "Without very great

Kettle-  
well's *Help*  
and *Ex-*  
*hort. to*  
*worthy*  
*Communion.*  
p. 89.

"and apparent danger, we cannot come unworthily to the holy sacrament. For *he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself*, 1 Cor. xi. 29. And without the like danger, we cannot neglect or keep back from it. *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you*, John vi. 53. This the ancient church generally understood of *eating his flesh* in the holy

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"sacra-



“ sacrament; which is the great reason they  
 “ give for that practice so common among them;  
 “ namely, why infants are to partake of it. And  
 “ of this there is great reason to understand this  
 “ place.” He goes on therefore to maintain that  
 interpretation, and to answer the objections made  
 against it.

I know of but two of the ancients who are  
 pretended to have understood our Lord’s discourse  
 otherwise; and they are *Origen*, and *Clement* of  
*Alexandria*. They are both of them so dark and  
 mystical in their interpretations, that ’tis not easy  
 to know what they meant. However, I will say  
 somewhat as to *Origen*. The passage that is most  
 opposite to this explication of our Lord’s mean-  
 ing, is only a translation of *Ruffinus*, and so the  
 less stress is to be laid upon it. \* “ Our Lord and  
 “ Saviour says: *Except ye eat my flesh and drink*  
 “ *my blood, you shall have no life in you. For my*  
 “ *flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.*  
 “ Because therefore Jesus is intirely clean, all his  
 “ flesh is meat, and all his blood is drink; be-  
 “ cause all his work is holy, and all his discourse  
 “ is true. For this reason therefore *his flesh is meat*  
 “ *indeed,*

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\* Dominus & Salvator noster dicit: Nisi manducaveritis car-  
 nem meam, & biberitis sanguinem meum, non habebitis vitam  
 in vobis ipsis. Caro enim mea vere est cibus, & sanguis meus  
 vere est potus. Jesus ergo quia totus ex toto mundus est, tota  
 ejus caro cibus est, & totus sanguis ejus potus est; quia omne  
 opus ejus sanctum est, & omnis sermo ejus verus est. Propterea  
 ergo & caro ejus verus est cibus, & sanguis ejus verus est potus.  
 Carnibus enim & sanguine verbi sui, tanquam mundo cibo, ac  
 potu, potat & reficit hominum genus. Secundo in loco post  
 illius carnem, mundus cibus est Petrus & Paulus, & omnes apo-  
 stoli. Tertio loco discipuli eorum; & sic unus quisque pro quan-  
 titate meritorum vel sensuum puritate, proximo suo mundus effi-  
 citur cibus. *Homil. VII. in Levit. p. 72.*

“ indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. For with  
 “ the flesh and blood of his word, as with clean  
 “ meat and drink he feeds and refreshes mankind.  
 “ In the second place, after his flesh, *Peter* and  
 “ *Paul*, and all the apostles are clean meat.  
 “ And in the third place, all their disciples, and  
 “ so every one, according to the degree of their  
 “ merits, and the purity of their senses, are made  
 “ clean meat to their neighbours.” Now if we  
 we were to guess at his meaning by this single  
 passage, we must take him to have been no  
 friend to the interpretation father’d upon the an-  
 cients. But ’tis observable he talks after the  
 same rate elsewhere concerning our Lord’s words  
 at the institution of the eucharist, *Matth.* xxvi. 26,  
 27, 28. † “ That bread which God the Word  
 “ owns to be his body, is the word that nourishes  
 “ our souls. ’Tis the word that proceeds from  
 “ God the Word, the bread that is from the  
 “ heavenly bread, that is set upon that table,  
 “ concerning which ’tis written, *Thou hast prepa-*  
 “ red

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† Panis iste quem Deus Verbum corpus suum esse fatetur, verbum est nutritorium animarum. Verbum de verbo procedens; & panis de pane coelesti, qui positus est super mensam de qua scriptum est: Praeparasti in conspectu meo mensam adversus eos qui tribulant me. Et potus iste quem Deus verbum sanguinem suum fatetur, verbum est potans & inebrians praeclare corda bibentium, quod est in poculo de quo scriptum est: Et poculum tuum inebrians, quod praeclarum est. Et est potus iste generatio vitis verae quae dicit: Ego sum vitis vera. Et est sanguis uvae illius, quae missa in torcular passionis protulit potum hunc. Sic & panis est verbum Christi, factum de tritico illo quod cadens in terram bonam multum reddidit fructum. Cur autem non dixit, Hic est panis novi testamenti, sicut dixit, Hic est sanguis novi testamenti? Quoniam panis est verbum justitiae, qua manducantes animae nutriuntur. Potus autem est verbum agnitionis Christi, secundum mysterium ejus nativitatis & passionis. *Id. in Matth. Hom.* XXXV. p. 76.

“ *red a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.*  
 “ And that drink which God the Word owns as  
 “ his blood, is that word which gives us drink,  
 “ and overflows the hearts of them that drink,  
 “ and is in that cup, of which ’tis written: *Thy*  
 “ *cup runneth over, which is excellent.* And that  
 “ drink is the fruit of the true vine, who says:  
 “ *I am the true vine.* And ’tis the blood of that  
 “ grape, which being cast into the wine-press of  
 “ his passion produced this drink. And so the  
 “ bread is the word of Christ, made of that  
 “ wheat, which being cast into good ground  
 “ brought forth much fruit. But why did he not  
 “ say, *This is the bread of the new testament,* as well  
 “ as, *This is the cup of the new testament?* Because  
 “ the bread is the word of righteousness, with  
 “ which the souls that eat of it are nourished:  
 “ But the drink is the word of confessing Christ,  
 “ according to the mystery of his nativity and  
 “ passion.” When men indulge their fancies af-  
 ter this rate, and will strain every thing to make  
 a deep mystery of it, ’tis not easy to understand  
 them. And since he talks no otherwise of our  
 Lord’s words, *John vi. 53.* than he does of those  
 at the institution of the eucharist, ’tis very pos-  
 sible he might not differ from the ancients about  
 the sense of the one, more than about the sense of  
 the other. I cannot but further observe, when he  
 compares the two *Israelitish* sacraments mentioned  
 by the Apostle, *1 Cor. x. 1, 2, 3, 4.* with the  
 christian sacraments, baptism and the Lord’s sup-  
 per, he brings in a text from *John vi.* concerning  
 the latter. \* “ Before, says he, baptism was in a  
 F “ dark

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\* Antea in enigmate fuit baptismus in nube, & in mari;  
 nunc autem in specie regeneratio est in aqua, & in Spiritu San-  
 cto.



“ dark figure, in the cloud and in the sea, but  
 “ now in its true form ’tis regeneration by wa-  
 “ ter and the Holy Ghost. Then manna was in  
 “ a dark figure meat, now in its true form the  
 “ flesh of God the Word is the true meat ; as he  
 “ himself says : *For my flesh is meat indeed, and my*  
 “ *blood is drink indeed.*” And it will not seem  
 strange that such interpreters of the scripture  
 should think the same text might admit of more  
 senses than one. And indeed he elsewhere men-  
 tions both together. I think the passage deserves  
 transcribing. He is descanting upon those words:  
*Behold the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift*  
*up himself as a young lion : He shall not lie down, until*  
*he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.*  
 \* “ But, says he, how shall this noble people,  
 “ so very highly commended in the scripture,  
 “ ever come to drink the blood of the wounded  
 “ or slain ; since the eating blood is so expressly  
 “ forbidden by God, that even we who are cal-  
 “ led from among the *Gentiles* are commanded ne-  
 “ cessarily to abstain from it, as well as from  
 “ things

Num.

xxiii. 24.

80. Tunc in ænigmate erat manna cibus ; nunc autem in spe-  
 cie caro Verbi Dei est verus cibus ; sicut ipse dicit : Quia caro  
 mea vere est cibus, & sanguis meus vere est potus. *Id. Hom.*  
*VII. in Numeros.*

\* Quomodo enim iste populus tam laudabilis, tam magnificus,  
 de quo tanta praeconia sermo Dei enumerat, in hoc veniet, ut  
 sanguinem vulneratorum bibat ; cum tam validis praeceptis cibus  
 sanguinis interdicitur a Deo, ut etiam nos qui ex gentibus vocati  
 sumus, necessario jubeamur abstinere, sicut ab iis quae idolis  
 immolantur, ita & a sanguine ? Dicant ergo nobis, quis est iste  
 populus, qui in usu habet sanguinem bibere. Haec erant quae &  
 in evangelio audientes ii, qui ex Judaeis Dominum sequebantur,  
 scandalizati sunt & dixerunt : Quis potest manducare carnem,  
 & sanguinem bibere ? Sed populus christianus, populus fidelis  
 audit haec, & amplectitur, & sequitur eum qui dicit : Nisi man-  
 ducaveritis

“ things offered to idols? Let them tell us then,  
 “ who that people is that use to drink blood.  
 “ This is what the Jews who followed our Lord  
 “ were offended at when they heard it, and said:  
 “ *Who can eat flesh, and drink blood?* But the chri-  
 “ stian people, the faithful people hear these  
 “ things and embrace them, and follow him  
 “ who said: *Except you eat my flesh, and drink my*  
 “ *blood, you shall have no life in you; for my flesh*  
 “ *is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.* And  
 “ truly he that said these things was wounded for  
 “ all. *For he was wounded for our transgressions,* as  
 “ the prophet *Isaiab* says: But we are said to  
 “ drink his blood not only by a sacramental rite,  
 “ but also when we receive his words in which  
 “ life does consist, according as he himself says:  
 “ *The words that I have spoken, they are spirit*  
 “ *and they are life.* He therefore was wounded  
 “ whose blood we drink, *i. e.* the words of whose  
 “ doctrine we receive.

So that upon the whole, I think there is no great reason to allege *Origen* as dissenting from the other fathers in the sense they gave of our Lord's discourse, *John vi.* And 'tis very possible his master *Clement* might not be against the same interpretation, though according to his humour of multiplying allegories, he has devised a very odd

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ducaveritis carnem meam, & biberitis sanguinem meum, non habebitis vitam in vobis ipsis; quia caro mea vere cibus est, & sanguis meus vere potus est. Et utique qui haec dicebat vulneratus est pro omnibus. Ipse enim vulneratus est pro peccatis nostris, sicut *Esaïas* dicit. Bibere autem dicimur sanguinem Christi, non solum sacramentorum ritu, sed cum sermones ejus recipimus, in quibus vita consistit, sicut & ipse dicit: Verba quæ locutus sum spiritus & vita est. Est ergo ipse vulneratus, cujus nos sanguinem bibimus, *i. e.* doctrinae ejus verba suscipimus.  
*Id. in Num. Homil. XVI. p. 123.*

*An Essay in Favour of the ancient Practice*

one for the place ; and if he took that to be the true and only sense of our Saviour's words, which I can hardly believe, he must be esteem'd the only ancient father who thought our Lord did not in that chapter speak concerning the eucharist. The passage is *Pædag. lib. I. c. 6. p. 100.* which the reader may consult if he thinks fit.

As to the rest of the ancient writers, who take notice of any part of that discourse of our Lord, they seem to have understood it of the eucharist, though I confess they are not many.

I find modern writers generally agree in asserting that their interpreting our Saviour's words, *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you,* concerning the sacrament, was the occasion of their introducing the practice of giving the eucharist to children. And therefore it may be objected here ; since that interpretation was a mistake, we can be no way concerned to imitate them in a practice which is built upon so sandy a foundation.

To this I answer : I make indeed no doubt, the interpretation is a mistake ; I do not believe our Lord there spake of that supper which he had not then instituted ; nor can I think Christ would to a multitude of captious *Jews* discourse in such a manner, concerning a design'd institution, of which 'twas impossible for them to have as yet the least notion, since he himself had never spoke of it. Mr. *Kettlewel's* reasons to the contrary do not here at all move me. And if I believed that interpretation first brought in the practice, and that there were no other reasons for it, than what the fathers bring from that discourse of Christ, I would be the last man who should say any thing in the behalf of it. But 'tis obvious, they many times allege weak arguments, and mistaken interpretations



pretations of scripture, to support such notions and practices among them as were built upon a much better foundation.

Thus for instance, St. *Cyprian* pleads earnestly *Epist. 63.* for mixing wine and water in the eucharistical cup: And one great argument he uses is, that this signifies the union between Christ and his people. For as the wine represents the blood of Christ, so the water signifies the people, according to that text; *The waters which thou sawest, are* *Rev. xvii.* *peoples, multitudes, &c.* and so the mixing these<sup>15.</sup>

two represents the union between Christ and his people. Now no man will think that accommodation of the words of St. *John*, by which *Cyprian* endeavours to establish the received practice, was the first occasion of it. I doubt not the reason of the practice was, because it was such a cup which our Lord blessed at the first institution, since he then took such a cup as was used among the *Jews* at the passover. And though some make a doubt, whether the paschal cup was always such a mixture, and represent the *Jews* as apprehending it an indifferent matter, whether water were mix'd with their wine; yet I think Dr. *Lightfoot* has clear'd *Vol. I.* the matter. "In these four cups of wine they<sup>p. 961.</sup>

"were to drink, they were curious about the  
 "measure and the mixture. The proportion of  
 "wine in every cup might not be less than the  
 "fourth part of a quarter of an hin, beside what  
 "water was mingled with it; for if they did not  
 "drink it so mingled, they held they missed of  
 "the right performance of that service. *These four* *Maym. in*  
 "cups, saith the author cited in the margin, *must* *Hhamets*  
 "needs be mingled. — 'Tis received among them as *umats. per.*  
 "a current maxim: *That whosoever drank these four* *7. & Gloss.*  
 "cups of pure wine, he had indeed done his duty about *ibid.*  
 "drinking wine, but he had not done his duty about

“*setting forth their freedom.*” And ’tis questionable whether they used on other occasions in those countries to drink their wine unmixed with water, since, as the same person observes from *Maymony*, this made the drinking of it the more delightful.

And a much better reason was given for this by some of the ancient Fathers and Councils, who speak of it as design’d for the more lively representation of Christ crucified, when the water and the blood issued from his pierced side. And that this practice was not owing to the fanciful reason given by *Cyprian*, or another not much better of *Albanasius*, is evident from its being mention’d by *Justin Martyr*, long before these reasons were ever thought of.

vid. Chry-  
sost. in  
Joan. Ho-  
mily. 84.  
Concil. in  
Trull.  
Can. 32.  
Apol. 2. in  
fine.

The like is the case now before us. I don’t think the forementioned explication of *John vi. 53.* was the occasion of the practice of giving children the elements; but rather that their ordinary practice in doing so, led, or however encouraged, them to fix upon that sense of our Saviour’s words.

The use therefore I make of their interpreting that text as they did is this; to shew ’tis probable the practice of infant communion was received from the beginning of the christian church; since otherwise they could not easily have fallen upon such a sense of the place, as asserted the absolute necessity of the eucharist in order to salvation. Their own practice in giving it only to the adult, would have wrested that interpretation from them, or at least have forced them to mention some restrictions and limitations with relation to it, whereas not a syllable of any such thing appears in the ancient writers.

The case is much the same in infant communion, as in infant baptism. As the ancients could never have fixed upon the interpretation of *John*

iii. 3, 5. which is so general among them, and makes baptism absolutely necessary to salvation, unless they had admitted infants to baptism; so they could never have received such an explication of *John vi. 53.* as made the eucharist absolutely necessary to salvation, unless they had used to give the eucharist to infants. And to speak my mind freely; I am persuaded they equally missed the true sense of both texts.

Let me here further add, that if this argument should be thought less forcible with relation to the times before *Cyprian*; yet it must be a demonstration that the practice was received afterward; about which nevertheless *Dr. Wall*, as I observed before, makes some doubt: For he says: “He thinks it probable, that *Innocent* did first *Hist. p. 514*  
“bring up this doctrine of the necessity of this  
“sacrament to infants.” For however it might perhaps be pretended with some colour, that the text, before *Cyprian*’s time, was inconsiderately applied to the sacrament, without a thought that infants should be admitted to it; yet when once the practice was set a foot, as it was confessedly in *Cyprian*’s time, and after it was pleaded for, as it was by *Cyprian*, from that text, upon the supposition of its asserting the absolute necessity of receiving the sacrament in order to salvation; I say then it must be next to impossible for men to interpret that text concerning the eucharist, without adding some restrictions, unless they were for infant communion. So that all those who between *St. Cyprian* and pope *Innocent*’s days, explain that text as relating to the Lord’s supper, must be look’d upon as so many witnesses that infant communion was practis’d among them.

But I proceed to the other part of my remark, to shew, that some other practices of the primitive



christians make it appear not improbable, that this also was received among them. And doubtless if we compare the usages of the ancients with those of our own time, we must be sensible they went upon principles very different from ours, and such as would much better favour infant communion, than ours can be supposed to do. According to the notions and schemes we ordinarily go upon, it would be esteem'd a very irregular and disorderly thing, for a person to eat and drink the elements without being present and joining in the prayers used at the administration: But 'tis certain the primitive christians had a quite different apprehension of this matter. I will mention three instances of this nature.

1. It was usual with them to send the eucharist from one church to another, in token of their holding communion with one another. This is expressly mentioned by *Ireneus*. \* “But the presbyters before you, who did not keep *Easter*, sent the eucharist to the bishops of other parishes who did keep it.” And this seems to be forbidden by the council of *Laodicea*, and so to have been in use till that time.

Can. 14.

2. It was not unusual in those ancient times for christians to reserve some part of the eucharist, and carry it home with them, that they might take it there by themselves in secret, which they used to do daily. *Tertullian* has several passages to this purpose. Thus speaking against marrying with an infidel, he says: † “Will not your husband”

“band

\* “Αλλ’ αὐτοὶ μὴ τηροῦντες οἱ περὶ οὗ πρεσβύτεροι τοῖς ἀπὸ ἡμῶν παγγικίων τῆς αὐτῆς ἐπέμψαν διχαίσιαν. *Fragm. Epist. Irenaei ad Victorem, apud Euseb. H. E. lib. V. c. 24.*

† Non sciet maritus quid secreto ante omnem cibum gustes? Et si sciverit panem, non illum credit esse qui dicitur? *Tertull. ad uxorem. Lib. II. c. 5. p. 190.*

“ band know what you taste in secret before any  
 “ other food? And if he knows 'tis bread, will  
 “ he not think 'tis such as 'tis said to be? ” And  
 in another place to clear the difficulty of those who  
 were against communicating on a fast day, because  
 thereby they broke their fast, he propounds this  
 expedient, \* to take the bread and reserve it till  
 their fast was ended.

3. They had another custom, that after the  
 administration of the sacrament, they sent the ele-  
 ments to such as were absent, by the deacons. x  
 This is most expressly asserted by *Justin Martyr*,  
 † in that *apology* which he wrote within forty years  
 after the death of *St. John*. My argument does  
 not at all oblige me to examine the grounds of this  
 practice, and the doing it would too much enlarge  
 this part of the essay, which has already run out  
 to a greater length than I at first intended. All  
 that I observe with relation to these practices is,  
 that the primitive christians apprehended, the con-  
 secrated elements might, by virtue of the institu-  
 tion of our Lord, be profitable to such as heard  
 nothing of the consecration or prayers used in the  
 administration. And it could be no difficult thing  
 for those who entertain'd such a notion, or at least  
 it could not be so shocking to them as 'tis to us, to  
 imagine the eucharist might be profitably given to  
 infants, who could not be supposed to hear or join  
 in the prayers used at the administration. And in-  
 deed infants as well as their mothers might often be  
 some of the absent to whom the deacons carried the  
 ele-

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\* *Accepto corpore Domini, & reservato, utrumque salvum est, & participatio sacrificii, & executio officii. Id. de Orat. c. 14.*

† *Καὶ τοὺς ἑ παρῶσι διὰ τῶ διακόνων παρέμπεται. Just. M. Apol. 2. p. 162.*

elements. So that all things being candidly and impartially consider'd, I am perswaded this practice may be reasonably enough supposed to have been in use from the days of *St. John*. And I question very much, whether any one will be able to produce as much evidence for the contrary opinion, as I have for this. And I shall be heartily glad to see what such as are skilled in ecclesiastical antiquity can produce on this subject, either to overthrow the account I have given, or to supply the many defects there are in it.

And if we now a little reflect upon what has been advanced, methinks it cannot but beget a favourable prejudice for this practice, and dispose men to hearken to what may be further said for it. What better recommendation of antiquity can almost any thing come with? It appears very probably to have been the practice of the most early times after the apostles, and to have continued in the church universally observed by the *Greek* church ever since; and by the *Latin* churches for about a thousand years; and never laid aside by them till they became most grievously corrupted, and till the monster of transubstantiation appear'd in the world, and that the same superstition occasion'd the abolishing this custom, and the taking away the cup from the laity together, and these were both professedly done by the same councils; and when the *Latins* laid it aside, it still continued among the purer christians of *Bobemia*, who bore such a noble testimony against the superstition, idolatry and tyranny of the *Roman* church, and was kept in use among them till within about half a century of the reformation: Let these things, I say, be all laid together, and I hope the reader will not think hardly of the practice, nor of me for pleading for it.

But



But after all that I have said, or that can be said for it from antiquity, I am free to own, that if the thing were much more clear and plain than it is, it would but little move me, if I could discover no foundation for it in the holy scriptures. I proceed therefore in the next place to inquire, Whether there appears any good reason for it therein?





## P A R T II.

*Containing such arguments as may be alleg'd  
from scripture for infant communion.*

HAVING carried the account of this practice so far back in antiquity, there is but one thing more remaining to shew 'tis as ancient as can be, and that is to produce the scripture reasons which warrant it. And that I shall now endeavour to do with all the clearness and plainness I can. And I hope the most of my arguments will be obvious to the most common and ordinary reader. And perhaps many of my readers will be surprized to find such a variety of reasons from the holy scriptures for a practice, which they have hitherto apprehended had nothing there to support it, and for the receiving which they by this time wonder at the primitive church. The arguments I shall here use are these that follow.

*Argum. I.*

I. The baptism and communion of infants stand upon the same foot, and therefore they who admit the one ought to admit the other also.

For the confirming this argument I will shew,

*First*, That the same reasons which are brought for infant baptism, are in like manner applicable to infant communion.

†

*Secondly,*

*Secondly*, That the objections against infant communion will admit of the same answers, as those against infant baptism.

*First*, That the same reasons which are brought for infant baptism, may with equal evidence and force be produc'd for infant communion. Let the reader consider with me some of the arguments produced in the one case, and try whether they are not as valid in the other.

1. One strong argument for infant baptism is taken from the words of the apostle: *For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.* I need not say how much stress has been laid upon this in the controversy about infant baptism; nor do I think 'tis more than the text will bear. But I desire only a reason, why this will not as well prove infants right to the eucharist, as to baptism. Let it but be observ'd, what sort of holiness the apostle speaks of, and what allusion he manifestly uses. The holiness he attributes to children stands in opposition to uncleanness; and so is to be explain'd from the ceremonial law. Now according to that persons were unclean, when they were debarr'd the publick worship, and the communion of the people of God. And accordingly in opposition thereto then persons were reckon'd holy, when they were fit and qualified for the service of God, and a communion with his people either in or out of acts of worship. An *Israelite* might, by reason of somewhat that had befallen him, be for a time unclean, that is not holy, or fit for communion in the publick worship, or even for private conversation, as rendering those that touched him, or any thing belong'd to him, unclean: But the *Gentiles* were always unclean. Whence *Peter*, upon the vision where-



whereby God had taught him that he had abolish'd this kind of uncleanness, speaks in that manner to *Cornelius*: *Ye know how that 'tis an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew, to keep company, or to come unto one of another nation: But God hath shewed me, that I should not call any man common or unclean.* So that in this sense the apostle must be understood to say the *children* of christians were not *unclean* but *holy*, that they were not as unclean persons under the law, debarr'd the public service, or communion with the church of God; but were reckon'd by God fit for it. And in the same manner as this warrants their baptism, it will their communion also.

See Num.

xix. 13, 20.

2. I see no reason why infants right to the eucharist may not as well, as their right to baptism, be pleaded from their being members of the visible church. I grant the argument is good: Infants are members of the visible church; therefore they are to be solemnly initiated and enter'd into it by the ordinance of baptism, which God has appointed for that purpose. But then why should not the same hold for their communion in the Lord's supper? If they are members of the church, and are baptized into it, why should they not as such be brought up in it; and be stately nourished and fed with that food, which God has provided for his church? Upon what reason are some of the members of the visible church, without any fault on their part, excluded from any of the privileges and advantages which God has granted to his church in common? For if infants are in the church of Christ, they must be reckon'd his sheep or his lambs, but let them be one or the other they are to be fed by his ministers, and this is one way of doing it.

John xx.

15, 16.

3. Ano-

3. Another plea for infant baptism, is their having an interest in the new covenant. 'Tis urged, that baptism is a seal of the covenant; and nothing can be more proper, than to apply the seal of the covenant to those to whom the covenant it self does belong. But then I desire to know, whether the Lord's supper is not a seal of that same covenant? And if their part in the covenant will infer their right to one seal of it, why not to the other? There is great need here of some very nice distinction; or I can't see how we shall be able to urge the same argument, when 'tis brought to prove their right to receive one sacrament, and answer it when 'tis urged to prove their right to partake of the other.

4. The harsh and injurious treatment of infants which is the consequence of denying them baptism, is urged sometimes in the behalf of their being baptized. They who refuse to admit them into the church by baptism, are represented as treating their children like dogs, according to those texts: *For without are dogs: 'Tis not meet to take the childrens bread and cast it unto dogs.* And whether they who refuse to give them childrens bread, the sacrament, as though it were too holy for them, treat them any better, may be easily judg'd of by those words of our Saviour: *Give not that which is holy unto dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine.* Rev. xxii. 15. Match. xv. 26. Match. vii. 6.

5. Another argument is, infants are capable of salvation, and therefore may receive baptism which is the means of salvation. And why does not the consequence as well hold to their receiving the Lord's supper, which is as much a means of salvation, as baptism?

6. Another plea made use of for infant baptism is, that such may be devoted to God. And certainly this is as good a reason for their partaking of the

the Lord's supper, as of baptism; since the one is as properly a devoting persons to God as the other. And is it not strange, there should be sufficient reason for devoting children to God in their infancy, and none at all to repeat and renew that dedication, before they are grown up to maturity?

7. Great stress is often, in the matter of baptizing infants, laid upon that text: *And they brought unto him also infants, that he should touch them: But when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: For of such is the kingdom of God.* Hence it has been argued, that Christ is willing little children should come to him, that he is pleased when infants who are not able to come themselves are brought by others to him, that he may bless them. And who has been able to assure those who make use of this argument, that Christ is only willing to have them brought to him in baptism, and not in the Lord's supper? Is not the giving them the eucharist, as solemn a way of bringing them to Christ, as the baptizing them? Why should we think Christ has no proper opportunity of blessing them, when he gives to his church the solemn tokens and pledges of his love and favour? Or, why are we to suspect or question his gracious readiness and inclination to bless them at such a season? And what reason can there be, that the faith of parents should not be as available in bringing them to the Lord's supper as to baptism?

8. 'Tis frequently alleg'd that infants are disciples; *Acts xv. 10.* and therefore they ought by baptism to be inroll'd as such, and to be solemnly initiated to his discipline. And certainly their receiving the Lord's supper is as proper a testimony of their continuing, as their baptism



tism was of their being initiated to be his disciples.

And since Christ would have his disciples *taught to* Matth. observe all things whatsoever he has commanded; cer-<sup>xxviii. 20.</sup>

tainly this is one of the things he has commanded, and this is one of the ways he has appointed of teaching his disciples. And what can be a more proper method of teaching baptized children to observe this ordinance in particular, than to bring them up from their very infancy to receive it? Is not this the way which all the world takes to teach children? Do people use to neglect to set children upon their feet, or begin to teach them to go, till they have acquired strength enough to be able to go alone? Do they use to forbear speaking to them in order to teach them to speak, till they are able to make themselves some distinction of sounds, or to understand all that is said to them? Is not every one sensible these things are to be taught them by little and little, and that they are to be begun with early, even before they come to take any great notice, or make much observation of things. And who can assure us, that Christ, though he would have young disciples, would not have any such method as this taken with them?

9. Whereas 'tis pleaded in the behalf of infant baptism, that it has been practis'd from the beginning of the christian church, I have likewise in-deavour'd to evidence the same to be true concerning infant communion.

The parallel between the arguments in the one and the other case might be easily run a great deal further; but I hope this specimen is sufficient to satisfy the reader of the justice and reasonableness of the first part of my assertion.

*Secondly,* The objections against infant communion will admit of the same answers as those against infant baptism.

The only objections which carry any appearance of weight in them, are taken from their incapacity to perform some acts which are required in the adult communicants, such as remembring Christ, discerning the Lord's body, and previously examining themselves. And just such arguments may be, and are, alleg'd against infant baptism. Infants are not capable of that repentance and faith, which are requir'd in the adult when they are baptized. And the same kind of answer will serve in both cases: They may not be capable of all the ends of the one or other institution, but they are of some, and those such as are a sufficient reason for their being admitted to either of these sacraments. If they are not capable of those mental acts with which the adult should come to these ordinances, yet they are capable of receiving Christ's blessing, and of having the blessings of the new covenant made over to them. They may be passive in having blessings conferr'd upon them, when they cannot themselves be active in receiving them. And which is more, this argument from children's incapacity, cannot reasonably be of any force to debar them from these federal rites of the one or other sort under the gospel, because though their incapacity was the same under the law, yet did it not exclude them from the like federal rites and institutions. But these things will again fall in my way, and especially when I come to consider, and answer the objections which are urged against this practice.

*Argum.* II. II. There are several things in the institution itself which well suit with infants receiving it, and which may well enough argue that infants should partake of the elements.

If in our thoughts we go over the several parts of the institution, *the taking bread, the blessing, break-*  
*ing*

ing and giving it ; and the taking the cup, giving thanks, and giving it, these were the acts of Christ, and are the acts of his ministers, and may as well be perform'd by them, when children receive, as when they do not. And therefore so far there is nothing in the institution that opposes their receiving the elements. As to the taking, eating and drinking, and their doing this in remembrance of Christ, I shall have occasion to consider these acts of the communicants, when I come to answer the objections which are made against this practice. What I chiefly aim at here is, that what is in the institution said of the body and blood of Christ, does as much suit infants, as any of the adult ; and therefore there is no incongruity in their receiving the bread and wine in this ordinance. Thus when Christ says : *This is my body which was broken for you* : Let any one tell me, whether this may not be as truly and properly said to infants, as to any adult christians. Was not the sacrifice of Christ as well offer'd for them, as for grown persons ? Was not his body as truly broken for them, as for any that are grown up ? And must not they be saved by his sacrifice, as well as any of the adult ? And if Christ's body was, as it certainly was, broken for them, and they have done nothing to forfeit the benefits of it ; why should not the signs and pledges of it belong to them ? In my mind, the popular prejudice against childrens receiving the Lord's supper may be refuted by the same argument our Lord made use of to expose the whimsical opinion the Jews in his day had concerning some kind of oaths. *Wo unto you, ye blind guides*, Matth. *which say, whosoever shall swear by the temple, 'tis no-xxiii. 16,* thing ; *but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the tem-17, 18, 19.* *ple he is a debtor. Ye fools and blind : For whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold ? And whosoever shall swear by the altar, 'tis nothing ;*



but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. Ye fools and blind: For whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? In like manner say I, Which is greater, the sacramental bread, or the sacrifice of Christ which sanctifieth it? If children have a part and share in the greater, why may they not as well have in the less? Why should the christian church act as though they thought, the bread in the Lord's supper was more holy than the broken body of Christ which it represents?

And the same may be argued concerning the eucharistical cup. Christ says: *This is my blood of the new testament [or covenant] which is shed for many for the remission of sins; or which is shed for you.* And may we not say to infants, *The blood of Christ was shed for you?* Are not they included in the *many* for whom 'twas shed? And does not that covenant or testament, which was confirm'd in his precious blood, extend to them? Why then should it be thought unlawful for them to partake of this sign of it? What account can be given for our placing a greater holiness, and our being more afraid of a profanation in the signs, than in the things intended and signified by them?

Arg. III.

III. The right of infants to communicate in the Lord's supper, may be argued from the account which the apostle gives us of the ordinance, *1 Cor. x. 16. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* So that according to him, this bread and this cup are pledges and tokens of our communion in the body and blood of Christ. Have then baptiz'd infants an interest and part in the body and blood of Christ, or have they not? If they have not; I can't think what

what their being baptized into Christ, whereby also Gal. iii. 27. they put on Christ, can signify: If they have; why do not these signs of that communion in the body and blood of Christ belong to them? Do we imagine, 'twill be an heinous indignity and offence to our blessed Saviour, to give these signs of his body and blood to those, to whom he imparts an interest in all the benefits and advantages thereof?

IV. I argue the necessity of admitting infants to Arg. IV. communion, because otherwise the Lord's supper will not signify the unity of Christ's mystical body, and so will not answer one great end and design of the institution.

This argument is built upon those words of the apostle; *For we being many are one bread, and one bo-* <sup>1 Cor. x. 17.</sup> *dy; for we are all partakers of that one bread.* I suppose the *one bread* the apostle here speaks of, is not to be understood of one single loaf, of which all the members of a congregation used at that time to partake. 'Tis probable enough, this was then their custom; and yet nevertheless he seems to speak of the eucharistical bread in general as one bread; and the *one body* he mentions, is no other than the whole visible church of Christ on earth. There is nothing that I can find in his discourse, that gives us the least hint, that what he here says must be restrain'd to the church of *Corinth*, which is the only particular church it can be imagin'd he should design, if he spake not of the catholic church. Had the apostle had any such intention he would have said, *For ye* (and not as he does, *we*) *being many are one bread and one body*: And so again in the last clause of the verse, he would have express'd himself in like manner. *For ye* (whereas it is, *for we*) *are all partakers of that one bread.*

Besides, let it be observed how that verse comes in, and is joined with what goes before. *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body: For we are all partakers of that one bread.* Now whom can the apostle mean in the former verse by the *we*, who, he says, blessed and brake the bread; but the apostles and ministers of Christ all the world over? Or if he has no regard to the acts of ministers, but considers the whole ordinance as perform'd in and by the church; yet is it not necessary to understand him then as speaking of what was done by the christian church in general? And is it not reasonable to understand the verse under consideration in the same manner, since therein he gives a reason and confirmation of what he had asserted in the former verse? So that I cannot see but his argument is concerning the catholic visible church. And this bread he calls *one bread*, whatever parts of the world it was used in, upon the account of that one single sacrifice of Christ which it represented. The expression, as some other parts of his discourse in that chapter seem to imply, must be understood to be allusive to the bread, which among both *Jews* and *Gentiles* was taken from the altar, when they held a feast upon a sacrifice. The apostle therefore considering the eucharistical bread, wherever used, as all taken from one altar, or one sacrifice, even Christ, he speaks of it all as one bread, by partaking of which all christians through the world signified, not only their partaking of the sacrifice, but likewise that they were all together one body, or one communion.

It were easy to shew, that the ancients thought the unity of the whole christian church was signified.



fied by this one bread of which they all partook. They looked upon this as signified by the bread, because the bread is made of many distinct grains of wheat, which being ground, and join'd together make bread; and in like manner many christians are united and joined into one body in Christ. I shall not set down the places themselves, but only refer the reader to St. Cyprian, Austin, and Chrysostom \*, as I might also to many others.

The question now is; *Who are they that make up this one body?* Are infants no part of Christ's body? This is contrary to the notions and schemes of all the *Pedobaptists* in the world. If then they are of the body, they ought according to the apostle's argument to partake of that one bread.

And since this text seems to me a strong evidence of the thing I plead for, I shall endeavour to make the argument as clear as possible, by putting it into form thus:

*Whatever ought to be receiv'd by all the members of the visible church, ought to be received by baptized infants.  
The eucharistical bread ought to be received by all the members of the visible church.  
Therefore the eucharistical bread ought to be received by baptized infants.*

The *major* in this syllogism is certain, supposing infants have a right to baptism. For by their baptism they are enter'd into the church, and made members of that body. *For by one spirit are we all* I Cor. xii. 13.  
*baptized into one body.*

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\* Cypr. *Epist.* LXIII. p. 154. & LXIX. p. 182. August. *Serm.* LXXXIII. de divers. et, Ante altare ad infantes de sacramento. Extat apud Fulgentium, p. 642. in tract. de baptismo Æthiopis moribundi. Chrysost. in loc.

*An Essay in Favour of the ancient Practice*

The *minor* proposition therefore alone needs to be proved. And I prove it thus :

*That bread, the partaking of which signifies and evidences all the members of the visible church to be but one body, ought to be received by all the members of the visible church.*

*The eucharistical bread is that bread, the partaking of which signifies and evidences all the members of the visible church to be but one body.*

*Therefore the eucharistical bread ought to be received by all the members of the visible church.*

Neither proposition in this argument can, I think, be denied. The *major* is plain from the nature of the thing. If the unity of the many that make up the church, is signified or evidenced by a partaking of that bread, then all must partake of it : Or else how can such an unity be any ways signified or prov'd by it? Let us suppose any persons members of this church, who do not partake of that bread ; how can their unity with the church, or their being of the body be signified or proved by its being received by others, when 'tis not by themselves?

The *minor* I am not to answer for, but the apostle, it being the foundation of his argument in which there must, for ought I can see, be a fallacy, unless we go upon such a supposition. He gives this as a proof that the many, of which the church consisted, did together make but one body. *For, says he, we are all partakers of that one bread.* But this is no proof at all, if all those many did not partake of that one bread. Nay, his assertion cannot be true according to the contrary notion. For then they were not all partakers of that one bread.

¶ V.

V. The apostle elsewhere uses the same kind of argument, to prove all christians are one by their  
all

all partaking of one cup: And there he expresses who were thus one, and consequently who partook of that cup, even all that were baptized. His words which I now refer to, are these: *For as the* 1 Cor. xii. *body is one, and hath many members, and all the mem- 12, 13.* *bers of that one body being many are one body: So also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been ALL made to drink into one Spirit.* Oecumenius, and some MSS. here read the words thus: *And have been all made to drink ONE DRINK into the same Spirit.* But I will not insist upon that, since I judge the common reading to be the best. Nor is that addition necessary in order to our perceiving, that he here refers to the Lord's supper. And accordingly the text has been understood by Beza, Grotius, Hammond, Gataker, Lock, and many other learned and judicious expositors both modern and ancient. The reader may apply to this argument whatever was said concerning the former, it being exactly of the same nature, only taken from the other element used in the Lord's supper. I desire however it may be observed how the apostle here speaks just as the ancient ecclesiastical writers use to do, and supposes plainly that all baptized persons drank of the cup in the sacrament. And his so expressly mentioning *all* in the beginning and end of the verse, deserves to be taken notice of; for 'tis evident the *all* that drank into one spirit in the end of the verse, are the very same with the *all* who were baptized into one body in the beginning of it.

VI. It seems to me highly probable, that in the *Arg. VI.* church of Corinth children were admitted to the Lord's supper.

Mr.



In 1 Cor.  
xi. 21.

Mr. *Lock* has very well observ'd, "That in their way St. *Paul* blames three things especially ; 1. " That they eat their common food in the assembly, which was to be eaten at home in their houses, *ver.* 22, 34. 2. That though they eat in the common meeting-place, yet they eat separately, every one his own supper apart, so that the plenty and excess of some shamed the want and penury of others, *ver.* 22. Hereby also the divisions amongst them were kept up, *ver.* 18. " they being as so many separated and divided societies, not one united body of christians commemorating their common head, as they should have been in celebrating the Lord's supper, *Chap.* x. 16, 17. 3. That they mixed the Lord's supper with their own, eating it as a part of their ordinary meal, where they made not that discrimination between it and their common food, as they should have done, *ver.* 29." And certainly the apostles words do fully justify his observations. *When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before other, his own supper: And one is hungry, and another is drunken. What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not?*

Now if the *Corinthians* used to eat their own ordinary meal in the assembly, not as a common one, but in distinct and separate companies, it seems very probable they had their families, and among the rest their children with them at those meals. And if they mixed these meals with the Lord's supper, 'tis not unreasonable to suppose the same persons used to eat both. And if this should be allow'd, we have here a scripture example of the practice for which I am pleading. I know it may be objected, that the *Corinthians* were guilty of so many

many abuses in this ordinance, that their example should not much move us. And that I grant; but then I further urge, that upon this supposition we have not only their example, but the apostles tacit approbation of it. For among all the things he blames in them, he says not a word against their bringing their children to the Lord's supper.

I would not have the reader imagine, I lay a greater stress upon this than what I really intend. I thought it too considerable to be wholly omitted, and yet I own it rises no higher than a probability, which adds some weight, when joined with the other arguments I urge for this practice, though it would not by it self be sufficient to establish it.

VII. I argue the right of infants to partake of the Lord's supper, from the nature of the ordinance, and one great end of it, as 'tis a badge whereby the people and servants of the true God and the Redeemer are distinguished from heathen idolaters, and the worshippers and servants of devils, or demons. Arg. VII.

These false gods of the *Gentiles* had their houses or temples, their tables or altars, their meat and drink, of which their worshippers used to partake in the feasts they held upon the sacrifices. And this they did in token of their communion and fellowship with those fictitious deities. These feasts, excepting their being kept in honour of a false God, do exactly enough answer to many feasts observ'd among the *Jews*, and to the Lord's supper among christians, which is, as I observed before, a feast upon the true and great sacrifice of Christ. The apostle therefore has made a comparison between the two. *What say I then? that the idol is any thing,* 1 Cor. x. *or that which is offer'd in sacrifice to idols is any thing?* 19, 20, 21. *But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice,*  
*they*

*An Essay in Favour of the ancient Practice*

*they sacrifice to devils [or demons] and not to God: And I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of devils.*

Now from this comparison and argument of the apostle I reason thus: As the table of the Lord is opposed to the table of devils; and the one distinguishes those who have fellowship with the Lord, as the other does those who have fellowship with devils, so 'tis reasonable to think the distinguishing badge should extend as widely in the case of the Lord's table, as it does in that of the table of devils. And the rather may we argue thus, because this distinguishing badge was instituted by our Lord long after the other had been used and practised among the heathen idolaters. Now if this be allowed, and it appear that children were partakers of the table of devils, that is of the feasts upon the idolatrous sacrifices, they ought likewise to partake of the eucharistical feast upon the sacrifice of Christ.

Let us then inquire what the practice was among the heathen idolaters. Now though the same kind of reasons which I have already observed, might occasion our meeting with little mention of infant communion in the ancient ecclesiastical writers, may likewise occasion our having the less in ancient heathen writers concerning childrens partaking of their sacrifices; yet I think we have enough to make the matter plain and evident.

And if we look into the scripture, and consider what hints of this nature that gives us, we shall find it probable, that children very young used to be defiled with their idolatry. I might mention their making their children pass through the fire to *Moloch*, which some think, was not only to kill them in that



that way as sacrifices, but was done sometimes as a kind of lustration. And since this was often done when they were very young; 'tis not unlikely they would as well make them partake in their other idolatrous customs, and particularly their feasts at the same age. The prophet *Jeremy* seems to hint to us, that young children used to partake of those feasts which the *Jews*, when they fell into idolatry, kept in honour of the queen of heaven. *The children* Jer.vii. 18.

*gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke me to anger.* In which words he seems to express the zeal with which all sorts among them joined in the service; the men in making the fires, the women in making cakes, and they who were so little as to be able to do nothing else, yet picked up sticks to make the fire. And certainly this zeal of the children for the service is an argument, they used to have their part and share in the cakes and the drink offerings. The pleasure those idolatrous feasts had afforded them made them so ready, according to their capacity, to promote them. And when God by the same prophet would set out the grievous wickedness of the *Jews*, he takes particular notice of the childrens affection to idolatry. *The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond; it is graven upon the table* 1, 2. *of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars. Whilst their children remember their altars and their groves by the green trees upon the high hills.* And was not, do we think, their tasting the sweet of those altars, the reason of their pleasant remembrance of them?

Further, that children among the *Gentiles* used to partake of the sacrifices, may be probably enough gather'd from *St. Paul*. There are two different cases he plainly speaks of in his first epistle to the

Corin-

1 Cor. x.  
19, 20, 21,  
22.

Ver. 27,  
28.

*Corinthians.* The one relates to such feasts as were held in the idol temples in honour of the idols, and these he absolutely forbids christians to attend, or have any thing to do with. *What say I then? That the idol is any thing, or that which is offer'd in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils; and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?* The other case he considers is that of the feasts which the *Gentiles* kept in their own houses, which were likewise many times upon the idolatrous sacrifices. And these he allows christians to go to, and to eat of such things, except when it might be a scandal to others. *If any of them that believe not, bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go, whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake. But if any man say unto you, This is offer'd in sacrifice to idols, eat not, for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake.* Now in this latter case what doubt can be made of their childrens partaking of the idolatrous sacrifices? And though a christian who was a guest with them did not eat these things in a religious manner, in honour of the idol, yet the *Gentiles* did; and as such they doubtless gave them to their children.

And if we look into heathen authors, we find that boys, while very young, bore a part in their sacrifices, as might be easily proved by many testimonies out of *Homer*, and other of their writers. 'Tis true there were some of their mysteries, as particularly the *Eleusinia*, which they could have nothing to do with till they were past their infancy, and were initiated to them, as they used to be while

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p. 2

while young. But there were several of their sacrifices, which after they were offer'd upon their altars, were distributed among the people, who used to eat them at home, and so might as well give them to the youngest of their children, as eat of them themselves. Such were the *ἐναΐσματα*, and several others. And besides, there were several religious feasts which related peculiarly to infants: They had several reputed Deities, whom they judg'd to have the care of children, and to whom they used accordingly to sacrifice. Thus some of the child's first hair used to be dedicated to *Apollo*: *Varro* tells us \* that at *Ambracia* this was the custom. And when they sacrificed and feasted upon the account of their children, they would doubtless make them partake of the sacrifice when they were able. So when children † first began to change their food, and to eat and drink, the same author tells us, the nurses sacrificed of the eatables to the Goddess *Eduſa*, and of the drinkables to the Goddess *Potina*. In which place he uses the word *sacrificabantur*, as I observ'd before in an active sense, according to the manner of more ancient times. And when the nurses sacrificed upon this occasion, who can doubt whether the children used to eat and drink of the sacrifice? And that *Donatus*, the old scholiast upon *Terence*, thought so, is plain by the remark he makes upon *Terence's* words, wherein he cites this passage of *Varro*, and by his application of a passage of *Virgil* to the same matter.

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\* Itaque Ambraciæ primum capillum puerilem demtum, item cirros, ad Apollinem ponere solent. *Varro in Cat. sen de liberis educandis.* p. m. 292.

† Cum primores cibo & potione initiarent pueros, sacrificabantur ab edulibus *Eduſæ*, & a potione *Potinæ*, nutrices. *Ibid.* p. 290.



ter \*. I am sensible, Madam *Dacier's* explication of *Terence's* words would somewhat abate this evidence. She says, the initiation he means, is that to the great mysteries of *Ceres*, to which she however owns they initiated children while they were young. The only reason she gives for this is, because the scene of that play is in *Greece*, and therefore *Terence* must be understood to speak according to the customs of that country. Now this reason does not convince me at all. For I think 'tis evident the *Roman* comedians took the liberty in the plays they borrow'd from the *Greeks* to speak sometimes according to their own customs, however they continued the scene in the same place they found it in the *Greek* authors from whom they borrowed. And thus that ingenious lady her self explains a passage † in another of *Terence's* plays exactly of the same nature. And certainly that place which *Donatus* has mention'd from *Virgil* is very much to my purpose, since *Virgil* there speaks to *Salonius* a child newly born ‖. There was likewise another sacrifice which seems to have been contrived on purpose, that children might partake of it as soon as they came into the world. They used then

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\* *Verba Terentii sunt illa :*

Ubi erit puero natalis dies,  
Ubi initiabunt.

*Plorm. Act. I. Sc. I.*

*In quem locum Donatus commentatur in hunc modum :* Legitur apud Varronem initiari pueros *Eduſæ*, & *Potinæ* & *Cubæ*, divis edendi, & potandi & cubandi, ubi primum a lacte & cunis transferuntur.

Quod *Virgilius*,  
Nec Deus hunc mensa, Dea nec dignata cubili est.

† Quicquid peperisset, decreverunt tollere. *Andr. Act. I. Sc. IV.*

‖ Incipe, parve puer, cui non risere parentes,  
Nec Deus hunc mensa, Dea nec dignata cubili est. *Ecl. IV.*

then to sacrifice with milk §, which is the proper and first food of children. And they who were so solicitous for the favour of their gods to their children, would not be indifferent, whether they were honoured with these tokens of their friendship, and were feasted by them. And that they were satisfied of their friendship to their children appears from their ascribing their protection, and the comfort of their food and their cradles, &c. to them.

And there is a passage I have already had occasion to cite out of *Cyprian* under the sixth remark of the former part of this essay, which is a full proof that infants used to partake of the *Gentile* sacrifices. For there he gives us an account of a sucking child, that was carried by her nurse to one of those sacrifices, to whom they gave of the bread crumb'd into the wine that was left of the sacrifice, because she was too young to eat flesh. And indeed to shut up this evidence they were so superstitious, as that they hardly eat any thing but what was sacrificed, and there was a taint of their idolatry in their most ordinary and common food. And *Casaubon* observes, that anciently \* “ They never kill'd any creature  
“ for their private use, but they consecrated some  
“ part of it as an offering to God. They who did  
“ otherwise are stigmatiz'd by that proverbial  
“ speech ; *He eats flesh of which no sacrifice has been*  
“ *offer'd* ; which used to be said of a wicked and  
H “ ungod-

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§ His femonibus [*Ita, consentientibus criticis, legendum, pro hisce manibus*] lacte fit non vino: Cuninae propter cunas, Ruminæ propter rumam, *i. e.* prisco vocabulo, *mammam*. *Varro ibid. p. 190.*

Atque alibi: Ibi enim [*apud divæ Rume sacellum*] solent sacrificari lacte pro vino, & pro lactantibus. *Id. de re rustica. lib. 2. p. 401.*

\* Nunquam autem ullum animal in proprios usus mactabant, quin ejus aliquam partem Deo consecrarent adolendam. Qui secus facerent proverbio notati, *ἀθυσία ἐσθῆς καὶ ἐδίστα*. Quod de homine impio improboque solitum dici. *Casaub. in Asbenaecum. Lib. I. c. 2. p. 35.*

“ungodly man.” So that by this evidence it will appear that their children used to partake of the sacrifices as soon as they began to eat flesh.

I hope I have said enough to shew, that infants used to partake of the idolatrous feasts upon sacrifices. I come now to apply this to the argument in hand.

The Lord's supper is, in some respects, as I observ'd before, of the same nature with those kind of feasts, *viz.* 'tis a feast upon a sacrifice; and 'tis design'd to distinguish those who belong to Christ, as the other were to distinguish those who belong'd to the false gods of the heathens. And can it be thought, that when Christ appointed a distinguishing badge of his friends, he did not design the use of it should be as wide and extensive as that of the opposite interest was, and had been for a long time? Had the devil his meat and his cup to betoken those who had fellowship with him, and has Christ his meat and his cup to betoken those who are in fellowship with him? And is it not reasonable to suppose that he intended these should be as generally receiv'd by his family, as the other were by the devils; and consequently that he design'd that children should receive the one, as they used to do the other? What reason can there be to think, Christ was more regardless of infants than the adult? That he was not as willing that christian infants should be distinguish'd from idolatrous infants, as he was that adult christians should be thereby distinguish'd from adult idolaters? And if a participation of idolatrous feasts would pollute and defile the heathen infants, why may not a participation of the christian feast be a means of sanctifying them? And since the apostle compares these two, as the distinguishing badges of those opposite fellowships; the reasons ought to be very clear and strong that exclude infants, who are confessedly called into the fellowship  
of



of Christ; since they were certainly among the Gentiles partakers of such kind of tokens of fellowship with devils.

VIII. I argue the right of infants to partake of the *Arg. VIII.* sacraments of the new testament, and consequently of the Lord's supper, from the right they had to partake of the sacraments of the old testament.

I might here take notice, that there is hardly any kind of service mention'd under the law, in which children are not spoken of as having their part. Thus for instance, when the law of God was read to the people, particular care is taken to let us know, it was before the little ones. *There was not a word of Josh. viii. all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.* Did they solemnly pray to God? We find particular notice is taken of the presence of such at the prayer. Thus when king Jehoshaphat prayed to God in his great distress, 'tis said: *And all Judah stood before the Lord with their little ones, their wives and their children.* Where the little ones are spoken of as distinguish'd from the children, as though it were design'd to oblige us to take special notice of their presence, and to prevent our supposing that very young children were not meant. Again, when God himself calls his people to the most extraordinary fasting, he takes care to specify children and even infants. *Blow the trumpet in Sion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly; gather the people: Sanctify the congregation: Assemble the elders: Gather the children, and those that suck the breasts.* Had they any extraordinary occasions of offering sacrifices of joy and thanksgiving, the children are spoken of as having a part therein. So at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem: *Also that day they offer'd great sacrifices, and rejoiced; for God had made them* *Neh. xii. 43. comp. Zech. x. 7.*

*them rejoice with great joy ; the wives also and the children rejoiced.* In fine, was a covenant to be enter'd into with the Lord, the little ones were reckoned

Deut.xxix.  
10, 11, 12, 14, 15. *in the number of those who were to do it. Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God ; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is within thy camp, from the beweer of thy wood, unto the drawer of thy water : That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day. — Neither with you only do I make this co-*

Mic. ii. 9. *venant, and this oath ; but with him that standeth here with us this day, before the Lord your God, and also with him that is not here with us this day. And those words of the prophet, From their children have ye taken away my glory for ever, are thus commented upon by Grotius, “ Ye have accustom'd the little ones “ to idolatry, lest they should ever think of wor- “ shiping me.” I have only taken occasion here to hint these things in a digression, which the reader will easily see might be pertinently enough urged to inforce the practice I plead for. But the great thing I shall here insist upon, and that at large, is what is advanced in the argument it self, that children, and even infants, partook of the sacraments of the old testament. And here I shall,*

1. Account for this way of reasoning, from the sacraments of the old testament to those of the new.

2. Prove my assertion, that infants used to partake of the sacraments under that old dispensation.

1. Then as to this way of reasoning, from the sacraments under the old dispensation to those under the new, the apostle is my warrant for it. He has as plainly, as can be, taught us to argue in this manner, by the comparison he has made of the sacraments under the two dispensations, and drawing inferences himself from the one to the other. Let any

any man read carefully the tenth chapter of the first epistle to the *Corinthians*, and I am persuaded, he will see his argument will not hold, nor his reasoning be strong and convincing (which yet it always is in the highest degree, when rightly understood) unless this supposition be laid as the foundation of all: That the sacraments of the old testament serve to direct us in the use of those of the new, and that we may safely argue from the former to the latter.

This is a matter of too great consequence to be slightly passed over. Let me therefore take some particular notice of his discourse in that chapter. The occasion may be easily gather'd from the scope of it. He is there, as 'tis obvious to observe, dissuading the *Corinthians* from idolatry. It seems plain, they had fallen into that sin, by going into idol temples, and by partaking of those feasts which were held in them in honour of idols, upon the sacrifices offer'd to them. To justify themselves in what they practis'd they used several arguments, which 'tis probable they had suggested to St. *Paul*, in a letter or message they had sent him. What their pleas were may be easily learn'd from the answers he gives to them.

They seem to have urged: That the not using such complaisance to their idolatrous neighbours would be very dangerous, and expose them to their utmost rage and fury: That this singularity, which would bring upon them abundance of vexation and trouble, was wholly needless, since there was no hurt or danger in what they did; they had no opinion of the idols in honour of whom those feasts were kept, for they look'd upon them to have no deity or virtue belonging to them, and that they could not therefore alter the nature of meats that were good in themselves; they continued true to Christ, notwithstanding their occasional attendance



on those feasts, remaining in fellowship with him, owning him, and being own'd by him: The truth of all which might appear by the baptism which they had received, and never design'd to renounce, and by their continued attendance on the Lord's supper.

We may see St. *Paul* in his discourse has an eye to the several parts of this plea; and particularly he shews how vain their hope was from their receiving the christian sacraments, baptism and the Lord's supper, by setting before them the displeasure and vengeance of God against the *Israelites*, who were in the like case, and all of them, men, women and children, received sacraments in their time. One cannot read what he says, without observing what a very great stress he lays upon this consideration, That the *Israelites* did *ALL* receive them; for he repeats it no less than five times in

1 Cor. x. the compass of four verses. Moreover, brethren, I  
1, 2, 3, 4. would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized into Moses in the cloud, and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink. And in the next

Ver. 5. verse he may seem to have had children particularly in his thoughts: But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now who were the persons that partook of these sacraments, who by reason of God's displeasure were overthrown in the wilderness? Were they not all the adult *Israelites*, except two persons, *Caleb* and *Joshua*? Must not St. *Paul* therefore in writing this, and the *Corinthians* in reading it, necessarily have had the children as well as *Caleb* and *Joshua* in their thoughts, as the persons he design'd to except from that overthrow, when he changed his stile, and spake of many instead of all? And does not this confine the warning he gives the *Corinthians*, to the adult communicants, in contradistinction

on to those who were but children, as 'tis in the example of the overthrow of the *Israelites*? Hereupon he adds: *Now these things were our examples, to* 1 Cor. *the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also* x. 6. *lusted.* I see no necessity of confining the examples he mentions in the plural number, to their bare overthrow. It seems natural to understand them as relating to all that he had spoke of before, the sacraments themselves, their signification, the persons that received them, the sin they committed, and the punishment God inflicted. As though he had said: "Their case was very like ours; they had sacraments much resembling ours, they in like manner partook of them; but when they placed a security in them, and grew licentious and wicked, God dealt severely with them, as he will with us also, if we make no better use of such privileges." Again he repeats this: *Now* Ver. 11. *all these things happen'd to them for examples: And they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.* And afterwards he appeals to the *Jewish* feasts concerning the Lord's supper: *Behold Israel after the flesh: Are not they which eat of* Ver. 18. *the sacrifices, partakers of the altar?* In this passage he speaks of those who feasted upon the peace-offerings, and such like sacrifices, in token of their partaking of the altar, that is of the sacrifices which were first offer'd to God upon the altar, and so became his; upon which account they were eaten as God's holy things, God allowing them thus to eat of his meat, and vouchsafing them in this manner a communion and fellowship with himself. Now this he mentions for no other end than to put them in mind, that in like manner christians by partaking of the elements in the Lord's supper, partake of the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. And when the apostle runs such a parallel as this, can it reasonably be doubted, whether the same sort of

persons who partook of such eucharistical feasts of old, ought to partake of the christian feast that was of the like nature? May we not fairly gather from his discourse, that the bread and wine of our great sacrifice is to be now as common to the christian church, which God has chosen out of the *Gentiles* instead of the *Israel* of old, as the partaking of the altar was anciently to them? I think therefore the apostle must answer for the way of arguing which I here take, and that 'tis evident he uses the same, drawing inferences concerning the christian sacraments, from those which were anciently given to *Israel* after the flesh.

2. The only thing which is necessary to be here further cleared, is, that children, and even infants, were partakers of the sacraments among the *Israelites* under the law. And this I hope to make out very fully.

There were indeed a multitude of sacraments which the *Israelites* partook of, but I question whether there was any one from which children were excluded. I shall now, in imitation of the apostle, descend to particulars, and speak of several of the instances he has alleg'd.

1. I shall begin with what he expressly mentions, the *Israelites* being initiated into the *Mosaic* religion. *Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea: And were all baptized into Moses in the cloud, and in the sea. As though he had said: "You that pretend to lay so great a stress upon your being initiated into the christian religion by a baptism of divine appointment, do little consider the same was the case of the ancient Israelites, who in like manner were initiated into the religion of Moses, and were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea."* 'Tis in vain for men here to pretend, this was no sacra-

1 Cor. x.

1, 2.



sacrament of initiation : St. Paul understood that matter, and God's design in what was then done, better than they with all their skill can do. And 'tis observable, he uses the same phrase here\* which is usual concerning christian baptism, of baptizing into a person. Thus he says : *As many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus : As many of you as were baptized into Christ.*

Now this baptism which the apostle considers as a sacrament of initiation for *Israel*, equally belonged, and was applied to all. The youngest infant among them that was then born into the world, was thus baptized into *Moses*, as well as those grown up to years of discretion. And as St. Paul parallels this with christian baptism, it seems to me a strong argument for infants right to baptism under the gospel.

2. The next instance shall be what he immediately subjoins, their eating of the manna, and drinking the water out of the rock. *And did all* 1 Cor. x. *eat of the same spiritual meat, and did all drink of the* 3, 4. *same spiritual drink ; for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.* And these he makes to answer to that spiritual meat and drink which christians receive in the Lord's supper. And I might here allege the remark which is made by many of the ancient fathers, that St. Paul observes a very exact analogy, making their baptism in the cloud and in the sea, to preceed and prepare them for their spiritual meat and drink in the wilderness, and hinting that they received the latter presently after the former. This I might likewise have produced, if I had needed it, as an evidence, that they thought all that were baptized ought presently to receive the Lord's supper. Now

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\* Καὶ πάντες εἰς τὸν Μωσὴν ἐβαπτίσαντο. 1 Cor. x. 2. Ὅσοι ἐβαπτίσθητε εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν. Rom. vi. 3. Ὅσοι γὰρ εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε. Gal. iii. 27.

Now this instance comes very close to the matter I am upon. The manna was spiritual, that is mystical, or sacramental meat; the water of the rock was spiritual, that is mystical, or sacramental drink: And the resemblance between these and the bread and wine in the Lord's supper, was the greater, because they both were figures of one and the same thing. The manna with the *Israelites*, and the bread with us, both signify Christ the bread which came down from heaven, that bread which Christ gave, even his flesh which he gave for the life of the world. The drink that stream'd from the rock, and the drink in the eucharist, both signify that spiritual drink we have by Christ, whose blood is drink indeed.

And a particular emphasis is, I think, to be laid upon those words in the apostle's discourse, *the same*. He does not seem to mean barely that the *Israelites* had the same meat and drink in common, and that they did all eat and drink one the same as the other; but his meaning is, that their spiritual meat and drink was the same with ours in the sacrament, that is, as to the spiritual signification of it. Thus many commentators expound that expression. And there is the more reason for it, because if the apostle had only intended the *Israelites* all eating and drinking, the one the same meat and drink as the other; he would then in all probability have used the like expression in the foregoing verse, and have said; They were all baptized into *Moses in the same cloud, and in the same sea*. And besides, the apostle confirms the interpretation I insist upon, by the reason he alleges to prove they all drank of the same spiritual drink. *For, says he, they all drank of that spiritual rock that followed them: And that rock was Christ*. This is a reason to shew not so much they all had one drink in common, as that their drink was of the  
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the same nature with ours, as both signified Christ.

Now to apply this to the purpose for which I allege it; as all *Israel*, even children and infants as well as the adult, partook of this spiritual meat and drink, the figures and pledges of Christ; so in like manner all the christian *Israel* of God, that is, all baptized persons, ought to partake of the eucharist. And if the pledges of Christ's body and blood might under the law be given to baptized initiated infants, I would fain know a reason, why they may not now under the gospel. Christ's sacrifice then was as truly the means of spiritual life as 'tis now: And good men were then by faith to look beyond those figures to him who was signified by them, as christians ought to do now. And yet notwithstanding all these things, infants partook of these signs then; and therefore by a parity of reason, as it seems to me, they ought to do so now.

I am aware some objections may be made against this instance, which I shall accordingly mention, and endeavour to answer.

*Obj. 1.* It may be alleg'd; that what *St. Paul* here mentions must be very improperly called a sacrament, since it was their daily food.

*Ans.* He has nevertheless represented it, as having the very same nature with those things which we commonly term sacraments (for I care not to contend about an unscriptural term) and he was best able to explain to us the meaning of it. Nor does its being given to them as their ordinary food at all hinder its having a sacramental nature, since the same will appear to be true in another instance I shall have occasion to mention, wherein every one must grant the thing was sacramental, and very analogous to the eucharist.

Further, every one must observe there was a comparative obscurity and darkness in that dispensation



tion they were under : The things which are now set before us in the gospel, were kept hid from the former ages and generations. But God was pleased to compensate, as I may say, for this by the frequency of revelations, the long continuance of the spirit of prophecy among them, and the appearances of angels who often brought them messages from God. And in like manner I can see no reason why we may not suppose, that upon the like gracious account he treated them in this manner in the infancy of their church state and constitution, that he fed them, as it were, with sacraments. This was not unusual among the *Gentiles*, who, as I observed before, hardly eat any flesh but what was offer'd in sacrifice, insomuch that the word that signified originally a sacrifice, *Θυσία*, came to be used for a feast, as *Mer. Casaubon* notes upon *Dionogenes Laertius*. And I think his observation is not unjust, that the same is true of the *Hebrew* word *זבח*, which though it primarily was used in a strict sense for a sacrifice, yet is put to signify a feast, or as the margin of our bibles renders it *good cheer*, *Prov. xvii. 1.* And indeed some have understood that place, *Lev. xvii. 3, 4.* as though it were a prohibition to the *Israelites* in the wilderness to eat any flesh, of which they had not first sacrificed to the Lord. But that may be question'd, and the *Jews* themselves differ about it. However, I do not think the objection can be of any force with him who observes how *St. Paul* speaks of this matter.

And by the way, I am inclined to imagine this consideration might at least encourage the primitive christians, in the interpretation which many of them give of the *daily bread* we are taught to ask in the Lord's prayer. They explain this of the eucharistical bread, and upon this they ground the custom they had among them of eating daily of it, for which end they used to carry it from the Lord's table,

*In Menedemo, lib. II. Sect. 130. p. 155.*

table, and reserve it always by them. I will not run into a digression upon this ; but leave it to the judgment of those who are skilled in their customs.

*Obj. 2.* Another objection which may be here made is: That the case is very different between the *Israelites* and *Christians* ; the spiritual meaning of the manna and the water were then hardly understood perhaps by any of the people ; whereas the meaning of the bread and wine in the Lord's supper is plain to every adult christian : So that now there may be more reason for insisting upon a persons understanding the nature of the ordinance, and consequently for excluding children, till they are able to do so.

*Answ.* This objection, if thoroughly consider'd, is so far from weakening my argument, that it very much confirms and strengthens it. For if those sacramental representations of Christ might then be received by the whole body of the people, infants and all, though the meaning of them was not understood, or like to be understood in any good degree, by them as long as they lived in the world ; much more may our sacramental representations of Christ be now received by infants, who though they know nothing at present of the design of them, yet will, as they grow up, come to be more and more acquainted therewith.

*Obj. 3.* It may be objected : These things could not be properly sacramental to *Israel*, because one of them at least, *viz.* the water out of the rock was applied to ordinary and common uses ; and particularly 'tis probable they used it for washing their clothes, as 'tis certain they did for watering their beasts, &c.

Numb.  
xx. 8.

*Answ.* I might again reply, that this objection is not so much against me as against the apostle. But I add further : As sacramental elements ordinarily consist of common things, so they are capable

ble of being applied to a common use ; and when they are thus used without any regard to the holy use to which they were primarily intended, they lose their sacramental nature, that is, cease to be holy and become common ; and God allows of their being thus used in cases of necessity. Let me here give an instance or two to this purpose, which I hope will fully confirm my answer.

And first, I instance in the case of *David's* eating the shew-bread. This bread was most holy, and like the rest of their service, was of a sacramental nature ; and when it was taken from the table, other bread being put in its room, it did not cease to be holy, but was to be eaten in the holy place by the high-priest, and the priests only. Thus 'tis  
 Lev. xxiv. 9. expressly said : *And it shall be Aaron and his sons ; and they shall eat it in the holy place : For it is most holy unto him of the offerings of the Lord made by fire, by a perpetual statute.* And yet in a case of necessity, and to preserve life, 'tis eaten as common bread, neither by persons allowed to eat it, nor in the holy place where God commanded the priests to eat it. And 'tis observable how *David* speaks upon this occasion : *The bread is in a manner common :* That is, the primary and most sacred use of it, to be presented as a memorial before the Lord, is over ; yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel : That is, he thought in such a case of absolute necessity he might have taken it off from the table, before the holy use of it was over, or the time came for new bread to be put in its room. And this action of *David* was approved by our Saviour, and appealed to as a precedent for his own justification.  
 1 Sam. xxi. 5, 6. *But he said unto them ; Have ye not read what David did when he was an hungred, and they that were with him ; how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shew-bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests ?*  
 Matth. xii. 3, 4. Since



Since therefore in the case of a great and urgent necessity, God dispenses with his own express appointment, and that which is certainly sacramental ceases to be so, and is allowed to be applied to a common use; 'tis very consistent with the apostle's representing the water of the rock as a sacrament, to suppose it might be used upon other common occasions, when there was such an absolute necessity for it, for the preservation of all the flocks and herds, &c.

And as the reformed abroad think the elements in the Lord's supper are no longer holy, than they are applied to that holy use; but cease to have any relation to the body and blood of Christ, as soon as the solemn service is ended; so the church of *England* seems to have had the same opinion till the time of the restoration. Then it was order'd, that  
“ If any of the bread and wine remain unconsecrated, the curate shall have it to his own use: But  
“ if any remain of that which was consecrated, it  
“ shall not be carried out of the church, but the  
“ priest, and such other of the communicants as  
“ he shall then call unto him, shall immediately  
“ after the blessing, reverently eat and drink the  
“ same.” Whereas before that, if any of the bread and wine remained, whether consecrated or unconsecrated, the curate was to have it for his own use, and might spend it in his family. So that it cannot seem at all strange to the generality of the reformed, or to those who hold the opinion of the church of *England* before the restoration, to suppose the water might be sacramental, and yet be allowed to be applied to a common use.

*Secondly*, I instance in the case of many of the things which were offer'd to God, and which the priests were allowed to spend in their families. These by being offer'd to God became holy, and accordingly had a sacramental nature, and the

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priests

Lev. xxii.  
10, 11.

Comp.  
ver. 7.

priests themselves might not eat of them in their uncleanness ; and they being many of them things taken from God's house and altar, were eaten as a feast upon a sacrifice ; and yet there were cases wherein they might be otherwise used, and the sacramental nature of them must as much cease, as did that of the water of the rock when the beasts drank of it. To this purpose are the words of the law : *There shall no stranger eat of the holy thing : A sojourner of the priest, or an hired servant shall not eat of the holy thing. But if the priest buy any soul with his money, he shall eat of it, and he that is born in his house : They shall eat of his meat.* So that here a heathen slave when bought with the priests money might eat of the holy things, and the reason is hinted in the last clause, *they shall eat of his meat.* These holy things were the meat or food of the priests family, by which he was to maintain it, and therefore all those who in the strictest sense belong'd to his family were to be fed therewith. Now in this case these holy things could not be eaten sacramentally. And very remarkable is the account which that judicious commentator Mr. *Ainsworth* here gives us from *Maimonides*. " The Hebrew canons say : The heave-offering, and the heave-offering of the tithes are to be eaten by the priests, whether old or young, male or female, by them, and their *Canaanitish servants and CATTLE.*" And if the cattel, as well as slaves, might eat of such things notwithstanding their being holy and sacramental, there must be an end of the objection against the sacramental nature of the water from the rock, from the cattels drinking of it.

Let me here further add ; That Christ has taught us in interpreting such kind of positive laws, to have a regard to the necessities not only of men, but of beasts. This he has done in the case of the sabbath. For I think there can be no doubt as  
little

little work and business as that of leading an ox or an ass to water was forbidden on the sabbath day, but the necessity of God's creatures gave them a dispensation for the doing this: And this necessity was so plain to be allowed that the *Jews* were always convinced of it, and however scrupulous about the sabbath day, never made any difficulty about the lawfulness of this work. And if the holiness of the day was dispensed with for the sake of the necessities of beasts, why might not the holiness of the water be in like manner dispensed with for the same reason? I have been the more large in answering this objection, because I have found such as were for laying great stress upon it. I proceed:

3. The next sacrament I might mention of the old dispensation, which infants might have administered to them, is circumcision. But however improper it would be wholly to omit the taking notice of this, now I am upon such an argument, yet 'tis needless to insist upon it with many words; because the thing is most express and plain in the law of God, that it was to be administered to infants, when they were but eight days old; so that it has never admitted yet of any debate or contest. I shall therefore proceed to mention some other sacraments of the old dispensation which infants were admitted to. And because the other particular instances I shall name will be several feasts which they kept, I think it will not be improper to let the next instance be this general one.

4. As religious feasts among the *Israelites* were of a sacramental nature, so children were reckoned proper to be God's guests at them, and to be a part of the number of those who *kept a feast to the Lord*.

I think all are agreed, that 'tis the nature of the eucharist to be a feast to the Lord. If then it appear, that children of old were reckon'd capable of

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keep-



keeping such a feast, there will be good reason to think they are so still. Now that children were to keep a feast to the Lord, I will prove by what we find said concerning them at the going of the Israelites out of Egypt. When *Moses* and *Aaron* speak to *Pharaoh*, they say: *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel; Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.* The reason alleg'd for their going shews, that all that *Pharaoh* was required to send away, were to hold the feast to the Lord. And is it not evident that children, even the youngest infants were to go as well as the adult? Do but observe, to clear this, the discourse between *Pharaoh* and *Moses* afterward. And *Moses* and *Aaron* were brought again unto *Pharaoh*: And he said unto them, *Go serve the Lord your God: But who are they that shall go?* And *Moses* said, *We will go with our young, and with our old, with our sons, and with our daughters; with our flocks, and with our herds will we go: For we must hold a feast unto the Lord.* You see here from the design of their going, viz. their holding a feast to the Lord, he argues the necessity of their childrens going with them. But how could this be a reason for their childrens going, if they were to have nothing to do with the feast? *Pharaoh's* answer indeed shews, he was much of the opinion which is at present prevailing, and that he thought children were not fit to serve the Lord, and therefore should not be allowed to go and hold a feast to him with the grown people. And he said unto them, *Let the Lord be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: Look to it, for evil is before you. Not so, go now ye that are men, and serve the Lord, for that you did desire.* This answer of his is owing to the interpretation he put upon their words, when they told him, God had said, *Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness:* And again, *Let us go, we pray thee, three days journey into the desert, and sacrifice*

Exod. v. 1.

Chap. x.  
8, 9.Ver. 10,  
11.Chap. vii.  
16.

Chap. v. 3.

sacrifice unto the Lord our God. This, according to his prejudice, was a desire of no more than that the grown men should go, and seem'd a plain exception of little children, that could not *serve* God, or sacrifice to him; but you see God had quite another sense of that matter, who makes this a reason for their going. And I may here observe, that the feast they were to hold in the wilderness appears from the last text, as well as some others in the history, to be a feast upon sacrifices, which makes the allegation the more pertinent to my purpose.

It may perhaps be objected by some against this argument, that it must suppose the flocks and the herds were to hold a feast to the Lord, since that reason is as much given for their going, as for their little ones.

But I answer: The discourse afterward between Moses and Pharaoh shews, why the keeping a feast to the Lord was a reason for their taking the flocks and herds with them. And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: Let your little ones also go with you. And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifices, and burnt-offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God. Our cattel also shall go with us, there shall not an hoof be left behind: For thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God, and we know not with what we must serve the Lord until we come thither. Their holding therefore a feast unto the Lord made it necessary to take their flocks and herds with them, because upon them offer'd in sacrifice the feast was to be kept.

Before I dismiss this matter, I will present the reader with Mr. Ainsworth's note upon the word that we have render'd *holding a feast*. "The first signification of the Hebrew word *לדא* is to dance, v. 1. 1 Sam. xxx. 16. or to turn round, Psal. cvii. 27. And secondly, 'tis applied to keeping a feast reli-

“giouly, which was with eating, drinking, dancing, and mirth. *Judg. xxi. 19, 21. Deut. xvi. 15.*” And yet tho’ their little ones were not capable of these things, they were to hold the feast, and bear a part in it as far as they could. And from this general argument ’tis evident God reckons children fit guests for a religious, or sacramental feast, or a feast upon a sacrifice, and he requires them to be joined therein. And since this is the very nature of the Lord’s supper, and we may argue from the *Jewish* sacraments to our own upon the warrant the apostle has given us, I think this is a clear proof of the matter I plead for. And thus having clear’d their right in general to partake of religious feasts, I shall go on to mention some particular feasts.

5. Another sacrament among the *Israelites* of which children might partake, was the passover. That the passover was a sacrament under that dispensation, and had in it very much of the nature of the Lord’s supper, will, I suppose, be hardly question’d. It was a memorial of their redemption, and an eucharistical feast, wherein they blessed God for it. The paschal lamb was a sacrifice, and so the feast kept by the *Israelites* was, as the Lord’s supper, a feast upon a sacrifice. I need not here meddle with the dispute, whether any beside the first passover was properly a sacrifice or no. For since the first passover that was held in *Egypt* was confessedly a sacrifice, it will make no difference as to my argument, whether we judge the subsequent passovers were of the same nature or not. For if they were, as seems to be implied in the expressions of *offering, and bringing an offering to the Lord in his appointed season*, ’tis evident the feast held upon the lamb was a feast upon a sacrifice: And if they were not proper sacrifices, yet they were memorials of those first sacrifices offer’d by the people in *Egypt*, and so must be consider’d as a kind of feasts thereon.

’Tis

Numb. ix.  
7, 13.



'Tis certain from the apostle's calling the passover a sacrifice, that one or the other of these notions must be allowed. And this sacrifice of the passover, as all other sacrifices, had a relation to Christ, and typified his great sacrifice whereby we were redeemed to God; and more especially it did so in its being roasted whole, without having a bone of it broken. St. Paul therefore compares Christ with the paschal lamb, and the Lord's supper with the passover supper; and directs the *Corinthians* to keep the christian feast in terms borrowed from that *Jewish* feast. *Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* Since then there is so great a resemblance and analogy between these two feasts, it appears reasonable to allow, that if children used to receive the one, they ought to receive the other also. And indeed as the two first sacraments I mentioned are pair'd by the apostle to resemble baptism and the Lord's supper, and the first of them the baptizing into *Moses* in the cloud and the sea, as initiating and preparing for the latter, the eating the spiritual meat, and drinking the spiritual drink; so we may likewise consider the two sacraments of circumcision and the passover, as another pair which very much answer to the two sacraments of the new testament. And as the qualifications for keeping the passover among the *Israelites*, were circumcision, and the being clean; so I think the only qualifications that can be requir'd for a persons partaking of the Lord's supper are baptism, which the apostle supposes exactly to answer to circumcision, and therefore calls it the *circumcision of Christ*, and the being holy. And this latter qualification I have already shewn children have from the express testi-

1 Cor. v.

7, 8.

Col. ii. 11

mony of the apostle. So that for ought I see, all baptiz'd infants have a right to the Lord's supper, till by rendring themselves unclean and unholy they deserve to be cast out of the church as heathens and publicans. But I proceed to shew the passover belong'd to children. And here I would use this distinction concerning the feast of the passover, that there was somewhat negative and somewhat positive in the institution; or there was a prohibition and a precept.

1. There was somewhat negative or prohibited in the institution, and that was the eating of leaven. And this prohibition extended as much to infants, as to any of the adult *Israelites*. Infants were not at the time of this feast allowed any kind of victuals that had the least measure of leaven in it. For indeed the *Israelites* were not suffer'd to have any leaven, or any thing leavened, so much as in their houses at the time of the passover. The prohibi-

Exod. xii. 15, 19. & xiii. 7. on is most express: *Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread, even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses. — Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days: And there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters.* And they were accordingly very

In Exod. xii. 15.

nice and careful in putting it away. Mr. Ainsworth from *Maimonides* tells us, "The *Hebrews* expound it thus, That a man should abolish it in his heart and count it as dust; and determine in his heart, that he will have no leaven at all within his power, but whatsoever leaven is in his power, it be as dust, and as a thing whereof he will have no use at all. And by the exposition of the scribes, he is to search after leaven in secret places and in corners, and to find it out and bring it forth out of all the bounds of his habitation. And so they search out and abolish leaven that night, at the  
"begin-

“ beginning of the night of the fourteenth day, by  
 “ the light of a candle, out of all holes and cor-  
 “ ners, &c. And the putting away thereof was  
 “ thus ; either they burnt it, or broke it small,  
 “ and threw it into the wind, or threw it into the  
 “ sea.” And to that care and diligence they used  
 in this search, the apostle alludes in the expression  
 I cited but now from him : *Purge out therefore the  
 old leaven.*

2. There was somewhat positive in the instituti-  
 on, or somewhat requir’d to be done by them, and  
 that was the eating of the lamb with bitter herbs,  
 unleavened bread, &c. And that children had  
 their part in this, may be argued both from the in-  
 stitution it self, and from the practice of the *Jews*  
 as a comment upon it.

1. I argue children had their part in the paschal  
 supper from the *institution* of it. And this, I think,  
 will appear by these following considerations.

1. The lamb is prescribed for an house or family,  
 without any distinction or exception that can be  
 thought to exclude children from partaking of it.  
 Thus the first institution of the passover in *Egypt* is  
 deliver’d in these words : *Speak ye unto all the congre-* Exod. xii.  
*gation of Israel, saying, in the tenth day of this month, 3, 4.*  
*they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the*  
*house of their fathers, a lamb for an house. And if the*  
*household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neigh-*  
*bour next unto his house, take it according to the number*  
*of the souls ; every man according to his eating, shall*  
*make your count for the lamb, &c.* Here is not the  
 least hint given, that the little children, who were  
 part of the house, should not eat of it. And if  
 there be any strength in that argument, which some  
 urge for baptizing infants, that we read in the *Acts*,  
 of the baptizing persons and their whole houses,  
 in some of which they think it probable there were  
 children ; much more will the same argument hold



good that children partook of the paschal supper. For that being a yearly feast for the whole congregation of *Israel*, it will be not only probable but certain, children must at all times have been parts of some of their households.

2. The exclusive clauses in the law of the passover, which declare who shall not partake of it, do no more relate to children, than to any of the adult. The only persons excepted by the law from keeping it at all, are the uncircumcised; but infants when they were but eight days old were freed from any hindrance of keeping the feast by virtue of that exception. And the hindrance of keeping it at the proper season in the first month, by reason of any uncleanness, or a persons being in a journey, no more concern'd infants than it did any grown *Israelite*.

3. Particular and exprefs notice is taken of children in the institution. *And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, what mean you by this service? That ye shall say it is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and deliver'd our houses.* This service then was a sign and memorial, as 'tis elsewhere call'd, of that deliverance which God granted to all the congregation of *Israel*, even to their whole houses, in the benefit of which the latest posterity would have a share. And it was but reasonable this should be signified by their partaking of this anniversary memorial of it.

Besides, it appears from the words I have quoted, that God design'd the passover for an instructive sign to children. And I think all must grant, that accordingly children ought to have partook in it, as soon as they were capable of asking the question, *What mean you by this service?* Or as soon as they were capable of understanding the answer that was to be made to that question. And considering how  
apt

apt children are to ask questions, and to be inquisitive to know the meaning of any thing they see more than ordinary, and considering how such signs, and especially those of divine appointment, which are accompanied with a particular blessing, give a mighty advantage to an instruction, and make it the more easy to be taken in; I say, considering these things, 'tis certain children might upon this account be admitted to the passover while they were very young. But then it must be remember'd, that the capacities of children so exceedingly differ, and some are able to speak and understand what is said to them so much sooner than others, that the age at which they would have been admitted to the passover, if they had gone by this rule, would have been very uncertain. But though this will not allow them to be kept from the passover beyond the age of two or three years at most ordinarily, I cannot see that there was any obligation upon the *Israelites* to wait for such a capacity in their children. And indeed the contrary seems more reasonable to me. For the words plainly shew, that the children might come to the passover without any previous and preparatory knowledge of the meaning of it, and they might come to receive at the feast it self their first instructions about it. And if there was no necessity of such preparatory knowledge, they might well enough receive in their very infancy, before they could speak, or understand what was said to them. I can find nothing in the scripture, that inclines me to think God counted children unclean, unholy, or unfit for his solemn service, or that he reckon'd his worship and ordinances would be profan'd by their communion therein; but I meet with very much to the contrary. And supposing the youngest infants partook of the passover, the service being anniversary, they could not be at above two, or at most three passovers, without learn-

learning somewhat by it, and so answering one great end of the institution.

2. That children had their part in the passover, may be proved from the *practice* of the *Jews*. Their practice, as is well known, is in many cases an excellent comment upon the law. How many things have those who are most conversant in their writings brought from them to explain several passages in the scripture, which would be otherwise little understood? And particularly how much are we indebted to their writings for the understanding we have of the passover, nay, and of the Lord's supper likewise, the elements of which we are all satisfied Christ borrowed from thence?

Let me here further add; that supposing the *Jews* had mistaken the original institution, and that God never design'd, and accordingly the most ancient *Israelites* would not bear, that children should partake of the passover; yet my argument from the practice of the *Jews* will not loose its force in the present case. For if we suppose, that it only amounts to an evidence, that in our Saviour's time the *Jews* used to admit children to the passover; that alone will be a considerable confirmation of my opinion, that children should be admitted to the Lord's supper. The reason of this is, because if the *Jews* admitted children to the passover in Christ's time, 'tis not likely he would at that feast appoint another so very much resembling it, and the matter of which he took from it; he would not, I say, do this, designing it should be received only by the adult and not by children, unless he had made some express declaration of such a design. But no declaration of this nature is to be met with in the institution; and therefore if I shew that children used to eat of the passover supper in Christ's time, I leave the reader to judge what the consequence must be. And if the testimonies which I shall allege concern-



ing the practice of the *Jews*, prove any thing at all, it must be, that this was their practice about our Saviour's time. 'Tis certain it could not be much after; for within less than forty years after his death, *Jerusalem* was destroyed by the *Romans*, and an end was put to the keeping the passover there, and so to all the usages they talk of in observing it.

Now in order to our stating rightly what their custom was in this respect, 'tis necessary to consider how they dealt with two sorts of infants, *viz.* those who lived at a distance from *Jerusalem*, and those who lived in it. After the children of *Israel* were gone out of *Egypt*, 'twas not lawful for them to kill and eat the passover in every place where they happen'd to dwell. God restrain'd them to that one place which he chose, and thither they were bound to go up yearly to keep this feast. The place which God at last fixed upon was *Jerusalem*, the metropolis of the kingdom, where the temple was built for his worship, and the ark was settled. Thither God requir'd all the males to repair three times in the year, that is to their three great feasts, of which the passover was one. Now as to those children which dwelt out of *Jerusalem*, though they might carry any of them they could conveniently to the feast, yet they did not think themselves obliged by the law to do it, while they were very young. Little tender infants were unfit to take a journey, and especially a great one, as it would be to those who lived most remote from the city. And the law of necessity and mercy was deservedly thought to dispense with their attendance in such cases, as well as that of sickness: For God desires *mercy and not sacrifice*. However, they look'd upon themselves bound very early to take up their children with them to the feast, as Mr. *Ainsworth* informs us from *Exod. Maimonides*. "The *Jews*, says he, hold from the *law* in *Exod. xxiii. 14, 17. Deut. xvi. 14, 16.* that  
"every

“ every child that could hold his father by the  
 “ hand, and go up from *Jerusalem* [gates] to the  
 “ mountain of the temple, his father was bound to  
 “ cause him to go up, and to appear (before God)  
 “ with him, to the end he might catechize him”  
 [that is, as he explains it upon *Exod. xxiii. 17. that*  
*he might train him up*] “ in the commandments.  
 “ And who so was bound to appear, was bound to  
 “ keep the feast.” So that their notion was, that  
 they were ordinarily obliged to carry up all their  
 male children to appear before God, and to eat the  
 passover at *Jerusalem*, when they were three or at  
 most four years old. For there are few children  
 who are not able at that age to take so long a walk  
 as that is.

Ibid.

But then as to the other sort of children, those  
 who lived at *Jerusalem*, and were in the very place  
 where the passover was to be eaten ; with them  
 they began much sooner. They made them par-  
 take of the feast as soon and according as they were  
 capable. So Mr. *Ainsworth* tells us from the same  
*Maimonides*. “ Also they say, A child that is able  
 “ to eat a morsel of bread, they catechize him in  
 “ the commandments, and give him to eat as much  
 “ as an olive of the unleavened bread.” They had  
 no law or custom that hinder’d those who were ca-  
 pable of eating of the lamb ; nor do I see any rea-  
 son to suspect they did not make children eat of it,  
 as soon as they began to eat flesh. And the eating  
 the quantity of an olive of that was reckon’d enough.  
 Thus Dr. *Lightfoot* tells us : “ *R. Simeon* (in the *Je-*  
 “ *rusalem Gemara*) in the name of *R. Joshua*, the  
 “ son of *Levi*, saith, that olive quantity that suffi-  
 “ ceth to discharge a man that he hath eaten the  
 “ passover, he must eat it sitting down.” But if  
 children were so young as not to be come to eat  
 flesh, yet if they were capable of eating a morsel of  
 bread, they gave them a bit, as big as an olive, of  
 that

Temple  
 Service,  
 Chap 13.  
 Vol. I.  
 p. 959.

that part of the feast. And every body knows children are very soon capable of this. For though the ancients were longer before they weaned them than we are, yet they followed nature's direction in accustoming them by degrees to other food as soon as they bred their teeth. Thus *Galen* \* directs "to feed a child with milk only, till he breeds his fore-teeth, but then to accustom him to more solid food, as women are by experience taught to do, first to bread, afterward to pulse and flesh, and the like." So that 'tis probable no children that were born and continued at *Jerusalem* could, upon the account of meer infancy, miss of partaking, at least in some measure, of the passover above once, and if they happen'd to be born presently after the time of the passover, they might not miss even once of eating as much of it as was thought absolutely necessary for grown persons. I think therefore there is a great mistake in the observation of the learned *Grotius*, who tells us, † "That children were carried by their parents to the temple at twelve years old, *Luke* ii. 42. And from that age they began to eat of the passover, and other holy things." This is contrary to the *Jewish* accounts of their practice. Nor is there any sufficient ground for his assertion in that text he refers to concerning our Saviour. It can hardly be imagin'd, that his parents who were so devout and religious, and went to *Jerusalem* every year at the *feast of the passover*, would, in spite both of the law

of

\* Τρέφειν τὸ παιδίον γάλακτι μόνῳ. Ἐπιδὲν ὃ φύσιν τοῦς ἐμπροσθεν ὀδόντας, ἐθίζεν ἥδη πῶς αὐτὸ, καὶ τὰ παχυτέρας ἀνέχεσθαι τροφῆς. Ὡς περὶ καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ τῇ πάλαι διδασχθεῖσαι ποῖσιν αἱ γυναῖκες. Ἀρτεμέντοι πρῶτον ἐξεξῆς ὃ καὶ ὀσπρίων τε καὶ κρεῶν. Κλ. *Galen*. de sanitate tuenda. Lib. I. c. 10. p. 55.

† Anno XII. filii a parentibus ad templum ducebantur, *Luc*. II. c. 42. Ab eo tempore incipiebant de paschate & aliis sacris vesci. *Grot.* in *Exod.* xii. 26.



of God, and the custom of the *Jews*, defer taking him with them to the feast, till he was twelve years old. And indeed had that been the first time of Christ's going to the feast, 'tis not unlikely his parents would have consider'd his being unacquainted with the way he was to go, and the usual method of returning home in companies, and so would have  
 Luke ii. 44. taken a little more care of him than they did when they travell'd a days journey, without knowing certainly, whether he was in the company belonging to them, or not. The evangelist gives not any hint of that reason *Grotius* alleges; but he relates what happen'd at that passover, because it was the first eminent and public discovery our Saviour made of his extraordinary wisdom and understanding.

*Grotius* alleges also a testimony out of *Josephus* to confirm his opinion; but that seems to be less to his purpose than his former plea. *Hyrchanus* was sent by his father to make a present at *Alexandria* to king *Ptolomy*. When he came thither, and artfully prevented his receiving the money he was to lay out for the present, the king sent to him to know the reason why he being sent to him by his father, had never yet come into his presence. And to this message he return'd answer: \* "That he was under a  
 " law, which forbids any one to taste of a sacrifice  
 " before he came to the temple and had sacrificed  
 " to God: And that in like manner he had not  
 " waited on him, because he waited to receive  
 " those presents from his father which he might offer to him who had been his benefactor." And is it not very odd to strain such a jest as this to make it signify at what age persons used to begin to attend  
 the

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\* "Οτι νόμος ἐστὶ παρ' αὐτῶν κολῶν τὸν θυνηθέντα γεύσασθαι  
 θυσίας, πρὶν εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν ἔλθῃ, καὶ θύσῃ τῷ Θεῷ. Κατὰ δὲ τὸ  
 τὸν τὸν λογισμὸν, ἔδ' αὐτὸν ἐλθεῖν πρὸς αὐτὸν, παρεμμένοντα  
 δῶρα κομίσαι τῷ πατρὶ ἐνεργέτη χρησμένῳ. *Joseph. Ant. Lib.*  
 XII. c. 4. p. 405.

the *Jewish* feasts? Was not the common custom, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, who never used to partake of the sacrifice before it was offer'd, sufficient to be the ground of such a jest as this? Besides, if the thing be taken strictly, 'tis not true, that persons might not eat of any sacrifice before they offer'd it themselves. Many might eat of the sacrifice, who were not allow'd to offer or wave it, and *vid. Ainf. in Lev. iii.* it was sufficient if this was done by another for them, as it might be for infants who could not do it themselves.<sup>s.</sup> And beside that, persons might appear at the temple and eat the passover before they were twelve years old, as I have already proved. And thus I have made it plain, that the passover used to be eaten by children, even infants; for children, when they begin to eat a morsel of bread, or a piece of flesh as big as an olive, are as much infants with reference to a capacity of understanding such a service, as a child newly born. And if infants were only kept from the Lord's supper upon the account of a natural incapacity of receiving the elements, as that was the only reason why any infants can ever be supposed kept off from the passover, I should not have meddled with this argument; but I reckon the case vastly different, when they are debarr'd the communion of God's church upon the pretence of a moral incapacity for it, which seems to me to imply such a slight and disregard toward them both in God and man, as I can see no reason from the scripture to attribute to him, or to warrant our using toward them.

And methinks it deserves to be remarked, that when our Lord borrowed the elements he appointed to be used in his own supper from the paschal supper, and was at his liberty to have pitch'd upon any other, he should fix upon that which was reckoned the first thing infants were capable of eating, and which was accordingly the first thing they used  
to

to give them of the passover. For, as I observed before, as soon as a child could eat a morsel of bread, they gave him a bit of the unleaven'd bread they used at the passover, as big as an olive. But I will not lay any great stress upon this, nor the way the apostle mentions, of keeping our christian feast allusive hereto; *Let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

Let me, before I leave this matter, suggest to the reader, that the consideration of what has been said concerning childrens eating the passover, may reasonably go a great way toward removing a strong prejudice that lies in mens minds against infant communion in the Lord's supper. For the passover was as truly appointed in remembrance of their deliverance out of *Egypt*, as the Lord's supper is in remembrance of our redemption by the death of Christ. And since the ordinances are both so far of the same nature, and infants were then as incapable of remembring and understanding the one, as they are now of remembring or understanding the other; why should the same incapacity be a greater hindrance to them now than it was then? And thus I have finish'd what I design'd concerning this feast of the passover.

6. Another feast of the old dispensation upon which children might attend, was the feast of weeks or pentecost.

7. Another such was the feast of tabernacles. 'Twas the same law which commanded all the males to appear before the Lord at these and the passover; and 'tis but reasonable to suppose it was interpreted alike in all the three cases. No doubt the *Israelites* thought, the same persons who might hold the feast of the passover, might likewise hold both the others, the feast of weeks, and that of tabernacles: And consequently they could not think infants were excluded from any of these three feasts, which



which are so often join'd together. *Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord God.* See Exod. xxiii. 14. And the practice of the Jews we find was agreeable to this interpretation. And so the reader will easily see, if he will consult Mr. Ainsworth. But since I have said so much concerning the passover, I will not repeat the same things, but leave the reader to apply in his own thoughts those considerations to these two feasts. On Exod. xxiii. 17. & Lev. xxiii. 40.

8. Children were allowed to partake of the sacrifices which were offer'd upon God's altar, and to eat at those eucharistical feasts which were held upon those holy things. The apostle in treating concerning the Lord's supper takes notice of this. *Behold Israel after the flesh: Are not they which eat of the sacrifices, partakers of the altar?* 1 Cor. x. 18. Whatever was offer'd in sacrifice, did by its being offer'd become in a peculiar manner the Lord's: And consequently whoever partook thereof did eat at God's table or altar, which was properly sacramental, and betoken'd their friendship, alliance, and communion with him. And I see no reason why we should make the least doubt that infants used to partake thus of God's altar.

The portions of the sacrifices which were taken from the altar, and were to be eaten, were of two sorts, and children might partake of both.

1. One such part of the sacrifice belong'd to him that brought it. And he was at his liberty to invite whom he pleased to partake of this, provided only they were clean. *And as for the flesh [viz. of the peace-offerings] all that be clean shall eat thereof.* Lev. vii. 19. Upon which place Mr. Ainsworth says: "Here Solomon Jarchi noteth, that whereas 'tis said in *Deut. xii. 27. And thou shalt eat the flesh*; lest any should say, perhaps none may eat of the peace-offerings but the owners that bring it, therefore 'tis said, every one that is clean shall eat (or, may eat).

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“*the flesh.*” And we find particularly they were allowed to let their households, of which their children were a part, to partake of it. *And there [in the place the Lord shall chuse] ye shall eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the Lord thy God hath blessed thee.* “*Houses,* says Mr. Ainsworth, that is, *households, children and such like, as the Chaldee expoundeth it, men of your houses:* And so *Moses* explaineth it in *ver. 12.*” And so he does very fully in these words: *And ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your men-servants, and your maid-servants, &c.*

2. Another part of the sacrifice belong'd to the priests. And this again was of two sorts.

1. The priest's portion in several things might be carried out of the temple, and be eaten in his private family, and by any that belong'd to his family, young or old, the former exception only being observed, that they were clean, *Lev. xxii. 7.* And indeed this was the food of his family, and it might as freely be given to children, or be put into any of their victuals, as it could be eaten by any grown person. And yet these were all holy things, as appears by God's calling them so, and by the laws he gave concerning them.

2. There were other of the holy things belonging to the priests which might not be carried out of the temple, but were to be eaten in it. These were most holy; and yet the children of the priests and levites might, I think, partake of these while very young, even from three years old. There is a notable place to this purpose, in the account given us of the order *Hezekiah* appointed for the priests and levites. *And Kore the son of Imnah, the levite, the porter toward the east, was over the free-will-offerings of God, to distribute the oblations of the Lord, and the most*

2 Chron.

xxxii. 14,

15, 16, 17,

18.

most holy things. And next him were Eden, and Miniamin, and Jeshua, and Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, in the cities of the priests, in their set office, to give to their brethren by courses, as well to the great as to the small. Beside their genealogy of males from three years old and upward, even unto every one that entereth into the house of the Lord, his daily portion for their service in their charges according to their courses. Both to the genealogy of the priests by the house of their fathers, and the levites from twenty years old and upward, in their charges by their courses. And to the genealogy of all their little ones, their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, through all the congregation: for in their set office they sanctified themselves in holiness. Whatever the obscurity may be of this passage in other respects, yet it plainly enough speaks of males that from three years old and upward, enter'd into the house of the Lord, had their service, charge, course, and daily portion there. Beside the covenant with Israel, there was one peculiarly with Levi. And as the levites were the Lord's instead of the first-born of Israel, so they were number'd from a month old and upward, that is from the very time when the first-born were to be redeemed. So that they were reckon'd in a peculiar manner the Lord's, and initiated as it were to his service from a month old; and we find them from that age reckon'd among those that had a charge belonging to them. In the number of all the males [of the Kohathites] from a month old and upward, were eight thousand and six hundred, keeping the charge of the sanctuary. And the only reason why they might not be much about the temple before they were three years old, was to avoid, I suppose, the great trouble they would before that age make there. But that they might about that age be in the holy place, and in some sort minister there, is plain from the instance of Samuel, whose mother carried him up, as

Numb. iii. 28.



1 Sam. i. soon as she had weaned him, to appear before the Lord,  
 22. and to abide there for ever. And 'tis said, *she brought*  
 Ver. 24. *him to the house of the Lord, and the child was young.*  
 And immediately after the account of his father's  
 Chap. ii. returning home, 'tis added: *And the child did mini-*  
 11. *ster unto the Lord before Eli the priest.* And there can  
 be no question made of his eating the holy things,  
 and living upon the oblations of God's house, while  
 he ministred there. Commentators labour hard to  
 strain the account given of *Samuel*, that so he may  
 be thought to have been grown up, before he mi-  
 nister'd to the Lord: But 'tis evident to any impar-  
 tial reader, that this was as soon as he was weaned;  
 and we cannot well suppose him to have been above  
 three years old. And indeed, had they taken due  
 notice of that place I have quoted from the *Chronicles*  
 concerning that age, they might have saved them-  
 selves the needless trouble of so many vain gues-  
 ses.

And if we look to the law concerning the eating  
 of these most holy things, we find that whereas the  
 other holy things were given to the priests, for  
 themselves, their sons, and their daughters, these  
 were to be eaten by themselves, and their sons alone,  
 nor are any of their male children disallow'd to eat of  
 them. *In the most holy place shalt thou eat it; every male*  
*shall eat it:* And yet it follows: *It shall be holy unto thee.*

Numb.  
 xviii. 10.  
 Comp.  
 Deut. xv.  
 20. and  
 Mr. Ainsl.  
 note upon  
 it.

Now since the Lord's supper does so exactly an-  
 swer to these feasts upon sacrifices; why should not  
 infants now as well partake of that, as they certain-  
 ly did of the other? Since they are not now unclean,  
 but holy; what reason can there be to exclude  
 them? We ought certainly to be very cautious,  
 that we take not upon us to call any common or  
 unclean which God has cleansed and sanctified.  
 Nay, we ought to be very careful that we do not by  
 our opinions or practices represent Christ as a mini-  
 ster of uncleanness, making those unfit for his ser-  
 vice and communion with him in his ordinances,  
 who

who were always counted clean and holy, and fit to bear a part in his service before his coming. And thus I have done with this argument for infant's right to the Lord's supper, from the right they had to sacraments under the old dispensation.

IX. Baptized infants may be admitted to communion with the church in prayers; and therefore they may in the Lord's supper. *Arg. IX.*

That baptized infants may be present and have communion with the church in prayers, I take for granted, from the practice of all the pedobaptists in the world, who, of whatever party or persuasion they are, without any difficulty or scruple permit such children to be present in their congregations at the time of prayer. And this I suppose they do upon a conviction of the warrant they have for it from scripture: Nor do I make the least doubt of their being in the right as to this practice. The only thing that I question here is, whether this be done by all of them upon a good principle and foundation? Many seem to think baptized children are suffer'd to be at the prayers of the church, because the church has no reason to exclude any person who will come to them; and they think that heathens have a right to be present at them if they please. I am very much mistaken, if their sentiments are just in this matter, or if persons have any other right to a communion in the prayers of the church, than what they have as members of the church, admitted into it by baptism. And I should be glad to know of those *pedobaptists*, who go upon the contrary supposition, what communion with the church they admit infants to, when they baptize them. What one privilege in the church do they admit them to? Right to communion in the other sacrament 'tis supposed they have none: Right to communion in prayers they are reckon'd to have in common with

heathens, antecedently to their baptism. So that for ought I see, the only privilege bestow'd upon them (I speak only with reference to the communion of the christian church, of which they are made members by baptism) is this, that if ever they shall think fit to come to the Lord's table, they shall not be baptized over again.

That I may speak my mind freely, which I may the rather do, since I have the ancient christians, and some of the modern on my side, our customs and practices seem to have perverted our notions of right: Which will make me the less wonder if this argument appears to many persons to carry no strength in it. I think in the most primitive church none were allowed to be present at any of their prayers, but such as had a right to partake of the Lord's supper. And indeed the only ordinary stated prayers they seem then to have made in the church, were at the administration of this ordinance. Heathens, catechumens of all sorts, and excommunicated persons were suffer'd to be present at the reading of the scriptures, and at the exhortations, sermons, or homilies; but none might remain in the assembly but the faithful at their prayers. Hence the custom was when they went to administer the Lord's supper, to bid those \* depart who could not pray. Whence *Chrysostom* thus smartly checks those who did not communicate †, alleging they were unworthy to receive: || "Then you are unworthy, says he, of the prayers;" and again: "Then you are unworthy of a communion in the prayers."

The

\* \* Ἀπέλθετε οἱ μὴ δυνάμενοι δεσθῆναι. Chryl. Hom. III, in Ephes.

† Οὐκ εἶ τ' δυσίας ἀξιῶ εἶδ' εἰ μετὰ λήψας; ἐκὼν εἰδὲ τ' εὐχῆς. Ibid.

|| Πῶς ἔμεινας, καὶ εἰ μετέχεις τ' τραπέζης; ἀνάξιός εἰμι, φησί. ἐκὼν καὶ τ' κοινωνίας τ' ἐν τ' εὐχαΐς. Ibid.



The ancient custom was, when the reading of the scriptures and the exhortation from them was over, the deacon required the catechumens, and such as did not communicate, to depart. I grant there were some prayers, at which some of the catechumens at least might be present, which I suppose were suited and adjusted to their particular case; but this I believe was a deflection from the more ancient practice. However this is certain, they would not suffer any catechumen, or any unbaptized person to be present when they used the prayers that belong'd to the faithful, and particularly when they said the Lord's prayer. Hence *Chrysostom* speaks in his sermons of that prayer as a mystery to all but communicants, just in the same terms as he uses to speak of the Lord's supper.

\* "If (says he, speaking of our being reconciled to our brethren) we do this aright, we may with a pure conscience come to that holy and terrible table, and with boldness say those words which are inserted in the prayer. The initiated know what I mean." He means they might then with boldness use that petition in the Lord's prayer; *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*. And 'tis evident from this passage, that as they used the Lord's prayer at the sacrament, so they never used it on any other occasion, when any beside the initiated, that is the baptized, the faithful, or communicants were present. And thus *Gregorius Thaumaturgus*. || "Let him that is a hearer of the scriptures and the instructions [*he means one sort of the*

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\* Ἄν τὸ τοῦτο κατορθώσωμεν, δύνησόμεθα μετὰ καθαροῦ συνειδέναι καὶ τῇ ἱερᾷ ταυτῇ καὶ φοβερῇ τερατείᾳ προσελθεῖν, καὶ τὰ ῥήματα ἐκεῖνα τὰ τῇ εὐχῇ συνεζευγμένα μετὰ παρρησίας φθέγγασθαι. Ἰσασιν οἱ μεμνημένοι τὸ λεγόμενον. *Chrysost. Hom. XXVII. in Genes. p. 358.*

|| Ἀκούων γὰρ, οἰσὶ, καὶ γαστρὶ καὶ τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ, ἐκβαλλέμεθα, καὶ μὴ ἀξιόμεθα προσευχῆς. *Epist. canonica, Can. XL.*

“catechumens] be turn’d out, and not be thought  
“worthy to be at the prayers.” Nay, see to  
what a length *Chrysostom* carries this matter, where  
he is exhorting persons to prepare for baptism.

\* “A catechumen, says he, is no ways related to  
“a christian. For he neither has the same head,  
“nor the same father, nor the same city, nor food,  
“nor garment, nor table, nor house; but has all  
“these quite different. For he has all these upon  
“the earth, the christian has them all in heaven:  
“To the one Christ is king, to the other sin and  
“the devil: The one has Christ for food, the other  
“has only that which putrifies and is corrupted:  
“And again, as for cloathing, the one has the  
“work of moths, the other the Lord of angels;  
“the city of the one is heaven, of the other the  
“earth. Since then we have nothing in common,  
“what affinity, I pray, can there be between us?”

Rom. xiii. In speaking of Christ as our cloathing, he refers to  
14. the words of the apostle; *Put ye on the Lord Jesus  
Christ*, or some such like place; but how our gar-  
ments are the *work of moths* I don’t understand, un-  
less he should mean by *σηλῶν*, *silk worms*, or perhaps  
instead of that should be read *σηρῶν*. However that  
be, we cannot wonder, that when they did not rec-  
kon the catechumens to have the same father with  
the faithful, they would not let them join with them  
in the prayers wherein they address’d themselves to  
God as a father. And indeed the ancient christians

were

\* Ἀλλότεια γὰρ ὁ κατηχούμενος τῷ πιστῷ. Οὐ γὰρ ἔχει κεφα-  
λήν ὡς αὐτήν· ἐκ ἔχει πατέρα τὸν αὐτὸν· ἐκ ἔχει πόλιν ὡς αὐ-  
τήν· ἔτι τρεφὴν· ἐκ ἔχει ἑνδυμασίαν· ἔτι τροφὴν· ἐκ ἔχει δίκην· ἀλλὰ πάντα  
ἐξηλλαγμένα. Καὶ γὰρ πάντα ἐπὶ γῆς τέτω, τὰ πάντα ἐν  
ἐξανοῖς ἐκείνῳ· βασιλεὺς τέτω ὁ Χριστός· ἐκείνῳ δὲ ἡ ἀμαρτία καὶ  
ὁ διάβολος· τρεφὴ τέτω μὲν ὁ Χεῖς· ἐκείνῳ δὲ ἡ σπτομένη  
καὶ φθειρομένη. Καὶ ἑνδυμασίαν πάλιν, τέτω μὲν τὰ σπτοῦν ἔργα  
ἐκείνῳ δὲ ὁ ἀγγέλου δεσπότης. Πόλις τέτω μὲν ἐξανός· ἐκείνῳ  
δὲ ἡ γῆ. Ὅτι ἂν ἐν μηδὲν ἔχωμεν κοινόν, καὶ τί κοινωνήσομεν;  
εἰπέ μοι; Chrylost. Hom. XXIV. in Joan.

were very exact in the care they used about the persons with whom they join'd in prayer. If any Can. App. one was possessed he might not pray with the faith- 79. *Ibid.* ful. If any clergyman pray'd with heretics, he<sup>c. 45. *Ibid.*</sup> was to be suspended. Nay, if any of the faithful<sup>c. 11.</sup>

prayed with an excommunicated person, though it were in a private house, he was to be suspended. And the like strictness did they use toward the catechumens, forbidding the faithful to pray with them as well as with heretics. We have an express testimony to this purpose in the *Apostolical Constitutions*.

\* "Let not one of the faithful pray with a catechumen in a private house, for 'tis not fit that a baptized person should be defiled with one that is unbaptized. Let not a pious person pray with a heretic, no, not in a private house: For *what fellowship is there between light and darkness?*

And I can't but think this was the custom of the church in *Justin Martyr's* time, and that then they never suffer'd any of the catechumens to be present at any of their prayers in their public assemblies, before the very day when they were baptized.

† "Those, says he, who are persuaded and believe the things we teach to be true, and promise to live accordingly, are taught to pray and seek of God with fasting, the forgiveness of their former sins, we also praying and fasting with them. Then we lead them to the place where there is water,

This

\* Πιστὸς μετὰ κατήχου μένει μήτε καὶ οἶκον περσεύχεται· ἔχ' δ' δίκαιον τὸν μεμνημένον μετὰ τῷ ἀμύητῃ συμκολύνεσθαι. Ἐυσεβίου μετὰ αἰρέσεων, μήτε καὶ οἶκον περσεύχεται· τίς γὰρ κοινωνία φωτὶ πρὸς σκότος; *Constit. Ap. Lib. VIII. c. 34.*

† "Ὅσοι ἀν' πιστεύουσιν καὶ πιστεύουσιν ἀληθῆ τὰ πάντα τὰ ἐφ' ἡμῶν διδασκόμενα, καὶ λεγόμενα εἶναι, καὶ βίβιν ἔτι δυνάμει ὑπὸ τῶν ταῦτα, ἔχεται αἱ τε καὶ ἀλλοῖς νηστεύοντας πρὸς τῷ Θεῷ ἢ πρὸς τῷ πνεύματι τῶν ἀφ' οὗ διδάσκονται, ἢ μετὰ συνευχομένων καὶ συννησιούων αὐτοῖς. Ἐπειτα ἄγονται ἐφ' ἡμῶν ἐνθα ὕδωρ ὅστις, καὶ. *Just. M. Apol. 2. p. 159.*



This fasting and praying appears to be on the day they were baptized. 1. By the church's fasting and praying with them. 2. By the profession and promise he speaks of as made by them, which all know used to be made at baptism. 3. By what he immediately adds, that then they were led to the water. 4. By his never mentioning any other prayers of the church, but these and those at the Lord's supper.

And if we consider the reason they alleg'd for their observing this order, does it not appear to be very substantial? How is it that God is worshiped and prayed to in the christian church, but as to a Father in Christ? And are not the addresses there made to him as such in the name of the whole assembly? There is good reason for this, and we act consistently with our selves, when none but christians are present at our prayers: For the whole visible church now, as well as anciently under the old dispensation, stand in this relation to God, and are reckon'd his children. But how can this be apply'd to those that are out of the visible church? I own therefore the notions of the ancients seem much more agreeable to me, than those which are entertain'd by some in our time.

Nor can I meet with any thing in the scripture, that would persuade one that the practice in the apostles days greatly differ'd in this respect from that of the following times. However promiscuous the assemblies were at the apostles preaching, yet I don't remember any instance of their praying before unbaptized heathens. The only instance which I think can be pretended, is that of the apostle *Paul* before the heathen mariners. *And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all, and when he had broken, he began to eat.* But I think this can hardly be thought a sufficient objection. As nothing is here set down of what

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xxvii. 35.

what he said in his giving thanks, so nor is it said that he did this with an audible voice: And it seems to me much more natural and easy to suppose that his giving thanks was in much the same way as is common among christians in our day, when any one comes to a table after grace is said, he says it for himself, but does it in presence of all at the table, who by his behaviour perceive what he is doing, tho' they hear not one word of what he says. This I judge to have been the case here: The apostle *took bread*, but did not do it carelessly and prophanely, but as he gave thanks before he eat, so his behaviour shew'd he was doing it, though he spake not aloud.

But if any insist upon it, that his *giving thanks to God* in the *presence of them all*, must be in their hearing as well their presence; though this is not in the text, yet even then it will not come home to the case in hand. For even upon that supposition, there was nothing of that worship which was peculiar to a christian assembly, but a bare blessing God upon an ordinary and common occasion, wherein all were equally concerned. And certainly 'tis very probable that if the apostle gave thanks before heathen mariners, he would do it in such a way as he knew they would readily join with him; that is directing his thanksgiving to the true God, without making mention of Christ; certainly he did not address himself to God as being through Christ the father of him and his whole company. If therefore he audibly gave thanks, he did it in some such way as the *Jews* used to do at their meals, blessing God as a creator, for making and bestowing such food.

Perhaps some *English* readers may think my opinion is overthrown by that text, *Acts* xvi. 16. *And it came to pass as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possess'd with a spirit of divination met us.* The expression *went to prayer* in *English* signifies often the very *act of praying*: But there is nothing of this here  
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intended. The word *προσεύχων* will not bear that sense: But certainly denotes their walking or going to the place where they were to pray. And though kneeling or standing were postures used in social and solemn prayer, yet no one will suppose that walking was ever thought a proper posture for it. But besides, it should not be render'd, *As we went to prayer*, but as we went to the *proseucha*, or oratory, or place of prayer. And so the Syriac renders it, *as we went to the house of prayer*. And so the same word is used in this sense, *ver. 13.* where 'tis in like manner render'd by the Syriac. So that here is not the least hint that the possess'd damsel was present at the apostles, or even the Jews prayers.

And whereas some have argued against the custom of the ancients from the apostle's discourse, *1 Cor. xiv.* as though unbelievers might come in and be present at their prayers, I think that must be owing to a careless reading of the chapter. For there is no manner of reason to understand what he says, *ver. 16.* as spoken concerning unbelievers. *Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned, say amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?* He had not as yet said any thing of unbelievers coming in among them; and doubtless in such a church there must have been many christians who occupied the room of the unlearned. Besides what he is there aiming at, is to shew how they should do what he had mentioned *ver. 12.* that is, so manage their spiritual gifts, as that they might *excel to the edifying of the church*. And as to what he says afterward, *ver. 23.* *If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?* It is occasion enough for him to speak after that manner, if unbelievers might come in among them in any part of the time of their being  
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affembled, wherein they spake with tongues ; and that they certainly did sometimes when they were not praying. And that he refers not to praying, but to instructing in an unknown tongue, may appear very probable from what in the next words he opposes to it : *Ver. 24. But if all propheſy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, and he is judged of all.* So that his whole discourse seems to me perfectly consistent with the supposition of their not allowing any heathens to be present at the prayers of the church.

To apply this now to the purpose for which I bring it ; if persons baptism be supposed the ground and foundation of their right to communicate in the prayers of the christian church, I can't but think the consequence of my argument will be good ; that if infants may have communion with the church in prayers, they may also in the eucharist. The reason of the consequence is, because christians do the same things in prayer they do in the Lord's supper.

In the Lord's supper we consider somewhat done to the communicants, and somewhat done by them. As to the former, which is in general the giving forth blessings to the communicants, no difference can be made between infants and grown persons, since God is able to give his blessings to the one as well as the other ; unless it can be shewn that he is unwilling to dispense blessings to infants. But as to the spiritual acts of the communicants, they are no other than what must be supposed to accompany every well order'd prayer. Let a man go over all these in his own mind ; such as repentance, faith, trusting in Christ, love to God, resignation to his will, &c. and he will easily perceive the same for substance must attend our prayers. If then baptized infants may have communion with us in those prayers, which are supposed to be offer'd up in such a manner ; what is there more to be done at the  
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Lord's table, that should be a reason why they should be excluded from it?

*Arg. X.*

X. Children are capable of what may be well thought sufficient to qualify them to receive the Lord's supper.

I hope I may take it for granted from what has been said already under some of the former arguments, that 'tis not unusual with the blessed God to admit children to a communion in the holy ordinances of his service, when they are capable of some, though not all the ends thereof. I readily grant, children, especially infants, are not capable of every thing relating to the Lord's supper, which grown persons are; and yet I doubt not to make it appear, that if we make God's dealing with them in other cases a rule for our judging of their capacity in this, it will be found sufficient to qualify them for receiving the eucharist. It has unavoidably fallen in my way to speak so much of this already, especially under the first argument, that I shall be the briefer here, contenting my self with barely touching upon such things as have been mention'd before.

I. Then they are capable of the external sacramental actions, at least some of them. These actions are three, *taking, eating, and drinking*. As to the first of these they may properly enough be said to do it, by receiving the elements when put into their mouths. I make no doubt, when our Saviour said to his disciples, *take, eat*, he meant the same kind of *taking* which is attributed to him, when 'tis said he *took bread*, that is, a taking it with the hand. And this, however the papists have alter'd it, was the practice of the ancient church, as is well known from many testimonies; and this is most agreeable to the original example and first institution. But yet it would be a great weakness for any one to imagine this to be a thing of such absolute necessity, as that

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no person may lawfully receive the Lord's supper, unless he can thus take it into his hand. What minister will think himself warranted to refuse a man the Lord's supper, because he has lost the use of both his hands, and so cannot possibly take it any other way, but by having it put into his mouth? And certainly if such an incapacity would be no hinderance in grown persons, neither ought it to be so in infants. I have here the practice in *Cyprian's* time on my side, as appears by his expression concerning the deacon's giving the wine to a little girl, in the story I have before related from him. "The Deacon, says he, persisted in his offer, and forced some of the sacramental wine into her mouth, whether she would or no." And St. *Luke* was so little sensible of any absolute necessity of this taking the elements, that he does not mention it in the account he gives us of the institution. Chap. xxii. 19, 20.

Again, children are very soon capable of eating a little piece of bread, and drinking a small sip of wine, as much as is absolutely necessary in receiving the Lord's supper. I think *Cyprian's* rule is very good in such cases: \* "In the sacraments of salvation, when necessity constrains, and God grants his indulgence, divine abridgments convey the whole to the faithful." Or, perhaps that may seem more pertinent in the present case, which is observ'd concerning the manna, which the apostle compares with the Lord's supper: *He that gather'd much, had nothing over; and he that gather'd little, had no lack.* Exod. xvi. 18. This, if we may believe such commentators as Mr. *Ainsworth* and Mr. *Clark*, figured the equal portion which all sorts of believers have in Christ, our heavenly manna. And this I might have taken

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\* In sacramentis salutaribus, necessitate cogente, & Deo indulgentiam suam largiente, totum credentibus conferunt divina compendia. *Cypr. Epist.* 69. p. 186.



taken notice of, as an evidence of the manna's carrying in it such a sacramental nature, as the apostle attributes to it.

Now infants are very soon able both to eat and drink as much as is absolutely necessary in receiving the sacrament, and when they are so young, that it may not be safe to give them the sacramental bread, they may without any danger taste the sacramental wine. Nor do I see any reason why they may not receive only in one kind, when thro' their age they are not able to receive in both. Thus the *Jews* gave children of the unleavened bread at the passover, when they thought them too young to eat of the flesh of the lamb, and the bitter herbs. And thus in *Cyprian's* time they gave children the wine, when they did not the bread.

I would not be thought to say any thing in favour of the practice of the papists; nor can the custom in *Cyprian's* time be reasonably alleg'd in vindication of their taking one half of the sacrament from the laity. The only reason why anciently they gave only one half of the sacrament to children, was because they were not capable of receiving the other, which they were very ready to give them as soon as they could eat it. Now this is vastly different from the method of the *Romanists*, who without pretending any such natural incapacity, have taken away the cup from all, but the person who administers. Nor can I see any reason why we may not lawfully give a part of the sacrament, when there is an incapacity to receive the whole. Thus I have heard of some who have had so great an aversion and antipathy to wine, that they could not taste or even smell it, without much disorder and disturbance; but would any minister think he might refuse such an one the bread barely because he could not receive the wine also? When a part only of the sacrament is given upon such reasons, there can be no fault in  
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the giver, nor can the receiver have any cause of complaint, since the defect is wholly in himself, and being a natural and involuntary one 'tis innocent and harmless: Whereas the people have great cause of complaint in the church of *Rome*, since they are robbed of that which they are as capable of receiving as he that administers, and which they have a right to by virtue of our Lord's first institution and appointment. And if any should blame *Cyprian* for his practice, I think they would do well to consider, whether their own, in not giving either element, is not worse than his, in not giving both.

2. Children are capable of receiving the sacramental elements as distinguishing tokens and badges of their christianity, their being Christ's disciples and members of the visible church. I think all grant this to be one use of sacraments. If then children are christians, disciples of Christ, and members of the visible church, they are capable of receiving the marks which belong to such.

3. Children are capable of receiving these elements as pledges and tokens of God's love and covenant-favour to them. I don't mean they are capable of doing this by an act of their understanding, but that being in favour with God they may receive these signs, as having what is signified thereby.

4. Children are capable of receiving the elements as members of a society, by whom the name of Christ, and the memory of his saving passion, is to be kept up in the world. No doubt adult christians should remember, and actually think on the death of Christ in receiving the Lord's supper: But yet they are not to look upon that as the only end of the institution. By this action there is a declaring his death to the world, while christians meet together, and are formed into societies, to celebrate the memorial of it. And to this that text seems to refer: *As* <sup>1 Cor. xi. 16.</sup> *often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew*

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*the Lord's death till he come.* Now children are capable, as parts of these societies, to join in this action, which is such a declaration to the world.

5. Children are capable of a communion in the eucharistical prayers. This is evident, because they are supposed capable of a communion in other prayers. And if they are capable of a communion in the eucharistical prayers, why not also in the eucharistical elements, since the whole nature of the eucharist is supposed to be express'd in them?

6. Children are capable of being brought to Christ in order to his blessing them. And this, as I have hinted already, is one proper way of bringing them. Nor can I see, why Christ should not be thought as ready now to give them the benefits of his body and blood, and so the tokens thereof, as he was, while here on earth, to take them up in his arms, put his hands on them and bless them; altho' 'tis likely they then understood as little what he did to them, as children can be supposed now to do of the Lord's supper.

7. Children are capable of being dedicated to God and put under renewed bonds and engagements to faithfulness and obedience. That they are capable of being devoted and dedicated to God, is evident from the nature of the thing, from the institution of circumcision, and from their acknowledg'd capacity for baptism. And if they are capable of the baptismal bonds, they must be so of the eucharistical: For they are only the same over again. And whereas the *pedobaptists* used to vindicate infants capacity for baptismal covenant engagements, by their capacity for the like in circumcision; I beseech them to consider, how they can refuse to accept of the same plea; that infants are fit to hold an eucharistical covenanting feast upon the sacrifice of Christ, because they were fit to hold such of old upon the legal sacrifices. And thus I hope I have said enough on this second part, to shew the grounds there are in scripture for this practice.

PART





# P A R T III.

## *The objections against childrens receiving the Lord's supper answer'd.*

**I** Come now to propose, and answer all the objections, which I have been able to meet with against the practice I have been pleading for.

I. 'Tis objected; That children, and especially *Obj. I.* infants, cannot *do this in remembrance of Christ*; and therefore the nature and design of the Lord's supper shews they are not qualified to join in it, since our Saviour when he instituted it, expressly requir'd his disciples to *do this in remembrance of him*.

In answer to this objection I offer these following *Answer.* things to the readers consideration.

1. That such kind of objections will as soon overthrow infants right to baptism as to the eucharist. *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved. If thou Mark xvi. believest with all thine heart, thou mayest be baptized. 16. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Acts viii. Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. 37. These and many Chap. ii. other such texts may as well be urged to shew the 38. necessity of repentance and faith before baptism; of which yet infants are as incapable as they are of remembering Christ.*

2. The same argument might as well have been urged against their eating of the passover. The design of this feast among the *Israelites* was to keep up the remembrance of their deliverance out of *Egypt*, just as the eucharist is to keep up the remembrance of our redemption by Christ. Thus when *Moses* is

giving commandment concerning the keeping of the passover, he says: *Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it: Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction (for thou camest out of the land of Egypt in haste) that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt, all the days of thy life.* And so elsewhere: *Remember this day in which ye came out of Egypt out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place: There shall no leavened bread be eaten.*

Deut. xvi. 3. *And it shall be a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth: For with a strong hand hath the Lord brought thee out of Egypt. Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year.* The like was the prescription for the feast of weeks: *Thou shalt remember that thou wast a bond-man in Egypt; and thou shalt observe and do all these statutes.* And since children were not hinder'd from keeping these feasts upon the account of their not being able to remember their deliverance out of *Egypt*, there is no more reason to hinder them from receiving the Lord's supper, upon the account of their inability to remember Christ.

Ver. 11, 14. So again, the feast of weeks and of tabernacles are order'd to be held with rejoicing; and in general all their feasts upon their sacrifices were to be observed in this manner. Children were no more capable hereof, than they are of remembering Christ: And since this did not exclude them from those feasts, why should it from the Lord's supper, which, as I have before observed, is in its nature so very like to them? These two answers may well take off the force of this objection with all pedobaptists; but for the further clearing it,

3. Let me inquire, what is the special import and meaning of that remembrance our Lord speaks of in the institution. Now this remembrance may be consider'd in a threefold respect. 1. With

1. With respect to our selves ; and so it would import, that we should in eating that bread, and drinking of that cup, actually remember in the most affectionate manner, the death and sufferings of our dear Lord for us. And that our Lord requires this of all those who are capable of it is readily granted ; for indeed the nature of the institution sufficiently shews so much. But then I deny, not only that he requires this of those who are not capable, but also that such kind of expressions in the institution can reasonably be interpreted to carry in them a design of excluding such. This is evident by comparing other institutions of the like nature, which I have already mentioned.

2. This remembrance may be consider'd with reference to the world : And so the command of Christ, *Do this in remembrance of me*, will import, that his disciples, as a body, or society, should keep up the remembrance of his passion in the world, by holding this appointed feast, the memorial thereof. Now as this keeping up the memory of Christ's sufferings in the world is to be the act of that society or body that belongs to him, and has benefit thereby ; so infants who are parts of that society are capable of joining with it in this feast which is held for such a purpose.

3. This remembrance may be understood to respect the ever blessed God himself ; and the meaning then will be, that we are to do this to *put him in remembrance* of Christ. Many in treating of the Lord's supper, leave out this, which I am persuaded is at least the principal thing intended in the injunction, and thereby they seem to me to lose in a great measure the right notion of the Lord's supper. That such kind of expressions are used concerning God, will be question'd by none who are tolerably vers'd in their Bibles, and some of them I shall have occasion to mention. And 'tis plain, this inter-



pretation is very agreeable to the nature of that solemn action. God is thereby put in remembrance of the precious sacrifice of his own Son, which was offer'd for our sins; the virtue of it is pleaded before him, for pardon, acceptance, the communications of his grace and spirit, &c.

Now that this is the meaning of the expression used by St. Luke and St. Paul in relating the institution, *Do this in remembrance of me* [*εἰς τὸ ἐμὲ ἀνμνησκόν*] may be argued from the use of it in other places. Thus the word *להזכיר* which we translate *to bring to remembrance* in the titles of two *Psalms* where 'tis used, is very properly render'd by the LXX interpreters *εἰς ἀνμνησκόν*. And that most learned and judicious critic, Mr. Gataker, pleads earnestly it must relate to God himself. For after he has taken notice of Junius's sense of the place, \* "*To bring to remembrance*, that is to preserve the memory of his trouble, and the deliverance he had received from God; he adds presently: But I had rather understand it; *To bring to remembrance, that is to put God in remembrance of those straits they were in.* And the contents of both the *Psalms* confirm my interpretation. Nor should I understand the word otherwise, 1 *Chron.* xvi. 4. where *recording* (the same word in the *Hebrew*) is expressly distinguished from *thanking and praising*." The words of the text he refers to in the *Chronicles*, are these: *And he appointed certain of the levites to minister before the ark of the Lord, and to record, and to thank, and to praise the Lord God of Israel.* And in my mind nothing is plainer to me, when I read those two *Psalms* he speaks of, than that the

\* *להזכיר* *ad recordandum*, i. e. *memoriam statuendam mali sui & liberationis a Deo acceptæ*. Jun. at ego malim, *ad reducendum in memoriam*, Deumque de angustiis, in quibus versentur, commonefaciendum. Confirmat tota hymni utriusque compages, nec secus ceperim Annal. L. I. c. xvi. v. 4. ubi *להזכיר* ab *להלל & להודות* disertè distinguitur. Gatak. Cinn. Lib. I. c. 10. p. m. 236.

the titles must be so understood. They are altogether made up either of complaints concerning his trouble, or of earnest petitions for speedy help ; nor can any thing be more unreasonable than that part of *Junius's* interpretation, that the *Psalms* was to preserve the memory of that deliverance he had received from God, since both *Psalms* shew he had not as yet received the deliverance ; but his trouble being heavy upon him, he was praying earnestly for it.

Further, the expression may seem to be borrowed from the *Jewish* service, and then it will be reasonable to understand it in the same sense in which it was used among them. We have a notable place to this purpose : *And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row [of the loaves of shew-bread] that it may be on [or rather to] the bread for a memorial [the LXX render it εἰς ἀνάμνησιν] even an offering made by fire unto the Lord.* “ That is,” as Mr. Ainsworth says upon the place, “ the incense shall be burned on the altar (and not the bread) which shall be for a memorial for the bread ; as the handful of the meat-offering with the oil and incense thereof is called the memorial thereof, Lev. ii. 2. bringing to God’s remembrance his covenant with his people.” And by the way, tho’ the *Hebrew* word render’d memorial be the same in both those places, Lev. xxiv. 7. and ii. 2. yet ’tis not so in the *Greek*, but in the latter ’tis μνημόσυον, a word commonly used by them on the like occasion. And what the meaning of that is we may see by the way in which St. Luke uses it, when he tells us the angel said to Cornelius ; Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial [εἰς μνημόσυον] before God. And accordingly I take the two expressions εἰς ἀνάμνησιν, and εἰς μνημόσυον to be exactly of the same import and signification ; and therefore understand Christ’s words in this sense, *Do this for a memorial of me before God.*

I make no doubt, this consideration that the re-

membrance made of Christ in the eucharist respected chiefly God himself, was one great reason why the ancient christians so often spake of the Lord's supper as a sacrifice, altho' nothing is more common with them than to deny they offer'd any proper sacrifices, as may be seen in all their apologies, when they answer the objections the heathens made against them upon that account. Let me here mention a remarkable passage of *Chrysostom* to my purpose. He had been discoursing of the frequent repetition of the same sacrifices under the law; and upon that occasion starts this objection: \* "And what? Do not we also daily offer?" He answers: "We offer indeed; but we make a remembrance of his death." And a little after he speaks thus: † "He is our High-priest who offer'd the sacrifice that cleanses us. That sacrifice we now offer, which was then offer'd, and cannot be consumed. This is done for a remembrance of what was then done. For *do this*, says he, *in remembrance of me*. We do not, as the high-priest offer another sacrifice, but always the same sacrifice, or rather the remembrance of a sacrifice.

I might easily collect a great many testimonies of this kind from other ancient writers; but I shall content my self with alleging one of the first of them, and that is *Justin Martyr* ||. His testimony has long ago

\* Τι ἂν ἡμῖς καθ' ἑκάστην ὁρὴν προσφέρωμεν; προσφέρωμεν μὲν, ἀλλὰ ἀνάμνησιν ποιούμεθα τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ.

† Ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς ἡμῶν ἐκείνῳ ἐστίν, ὃς καὶ θυσίαν καὶ καθαίρεισαν ἡμᾶς προσενεγκάν. Ἐκείνην προσφέρωμεν καὶ νῦν καὶ τότε προσενεχθήσαν, καὶ ἀνάλωσιν. Τὸ τοῦτο εἰς ἀνάμνησιν γίνεται τοῦ τότε γενομένου. Τὸ τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, ὅσοι, εἰς ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν. Οὐκ ἄλλην θυσίαν καθάπερ ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὴν αἰὶ ποιεῖμεν· μᾶλλον δ' ἀνάμνησιν ἐργαζόμεθα θυσίας. Chrysost. Hom. XVII. in Hebr.

|| Ὅτι μὲν ὅν καὶ εὐχαὶ καὶ εὐχαριστίαι ὑπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου γίνονται, τέλει μὲν καὶ εὐαρεστοί ἵσιν τῷ θεῷ θυσίαι, καὶ αὐτὸς φησὶ ταῦτα



ago been taken notice of by Mr. *Joseph Mede*, in whom the reader may meet with testimonies from many other of the fathers. Thus he translates *Justin's* word's: "That prayers and thanksgivings made by those that are worthy, are the only sacrifices that are perfect and acceptable to God, I do also affirm; for these are the only sacrifices which christians have been taught they should perform, even in that thankful remembrance of their food both dry and liquid, wherein also is commemorated the passion which the Son of God suffer'd by himself." *Mede's Christian Sacrifice*, Ch. 5. p. 362. But to return from this digression;

Another place there is wherein the LXX use the word ἀναμνήσεις, which is very pertinent to my present purpose. Also in the day of your gladness, and in Num. x. your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the Lord your God. And we may explain the sense in which this memorial before God is spoken of, from the foregoing verse. And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the Lord your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies. Now if the Lord's supper is in this sense a memorial or remembrance to God of the death of Christ, I desire any one to consider for whose sake God must be understood to be put in mind of it. Must it not be for the sake of the whole christian congregation? Thus that memorial, I just now mention'd, was not to be used on private, but only

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ταῦτα γὰρ μόνα καὶ χειριστοὶ παρέλαβον ποιεῖν, καὶ ἐπ' ἀναμνήσει  
 ὃ τ' ἐροῦντες αὐτῶν ξηραῖς τε καὶ ὑγρῶν, ἐν ᾗ καὶ τὰ πάθους ὃ πέ-  
 τονθε δι' αὐτῶν ὁ Θεὸς τῶ Θεῷ [lege, inquit Medus ὁ υἱὸς τῶ Θεοῦ]  
 μέμνηται. Just. Dial. cum Trypho. p. 112.

only on public occasions. "So the Jews," says Mr. Ainsworth, "understood this law, not for mens private sacrifices, but for the public churches: They did not blow save only at the congregations offering which was appointed them." And if this memorial of Chrſt's death is made in the name and behalf of the whole church, infants as well as grown persons, there is the more reason why it should be signified to be made for them by their all partaking of it.

There is but one place more where this word is used, and that is in the new testament. *But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance* [*ἀνάμνησις*] *made of sins every year.* There is no necessity that I should suppose the word ἀνάμνησις never signifies any other remembrance than that which I think it principally does in the institution of the eucharist. Nor do I pretend any such thing. I know the word is used otherwise in profane authors, and therefore may consistently enough with my argument allow it may be used so in this place. The like is easy to be observed in other instances. To go no farther than the word which the apostle joins with this ἀνάμνησις ἀμαρτιῶν a remembrance of sins; every one knows that ἀμαρτία is often put by the LXX to signify a sin-offering, answering to the words אֲשָׁמָה and עֹשָׂה and that so 'tis to be understood where Chrſt is said to be made sin for us: And yet that does not hinder its being sometimes used in its more proper sense for *unrighteousness*. And though ἀμαρτία will bear such a sense, yet that phrase *κατὰ* Heb. x. 8. ἀμαρτίας is according to the use of the LXX appropriated to sacrifice; and so tho' ἀνάμνησις may signify any remembrance, yet if the use of the expression εἰς ἀνάμνησιν in the LXX is constantly that which I have mention'd, 'twill be but reasonable to take it so in the institution of the Lord's supper, notwithstanding ἀνάμνησις is taken otherwise elsewhere. But with-

1 Cor.  
v. 21.

1 John v.  
17.

Heb. x. 8.

al it must be observ'd that the remembrance spoken of in that place by the apostle is a remembrance made to God; for it was made by sacrifice, on the great day of atonement to which he evidently refers. Upon the whole, if this remembrance be explain'd according as I think it should, 'tis a good argument for children's receiving: And if it be explain'd otherwise, it cannot justly be pleaded in opposition to their right.

II. Children are not capable of performing the *obj. II.* duty of self-examination, which is prescribed as previously necessary to a persons receiving the Lord's supper: *But let a man examine himself, and so let him* 1 Cor. *eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.* And if a man *xi. 28.* must *so*, and no otherwise *eat of that bread*, 'tis evident children must be excluded, because they cannot possibly examine themselves. I answer,

I. If I should allow the words of the apostle to *Ans.* be taken in their true sense in the objection; yet the *pedobaptists*, must own that the texts I mention'd before may be as strongly urged against infant-baptism, as this can against infant-communion. Nay, I don't see but by the same rule we may exclude children from all the parts of worship. Thus for instance, children are not according to this way of arguing to be suffer'd to pray, till they can pray in faith. For another apostle prescribes this as a rule for any man that prays: *But let him ask in faith,* Jam. i. 6, *nothing wavering.* And he adds: *For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind, and tossed.* For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. But does any man think, he is not to put his children upon praying by themselves, or upon joining in prayer with others, till they can pray in faith? The like faith is necessary in hearing the word. *For the word preached does not profit,* Heb. iv. 2. *not being mixed with faith in them that hear it.* Nay, we are required to *lay aside all malice, and all guile,* 1 Pet. ii. *and 1, 2.*



and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings, and thus to desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. And the danger of hearing the word unprofitably is very awfully represented as well as that of eating and drinking unworthily. For ministers are to them that perish the savour of death unto death, as they are to them that are saved the savour of life unto life.

2 Cor.  
ii. 16.

I think Dr. Wall, tho' by what I have cited from him he appears to be no friend to the practice, has yet with great strength as well as fairness answer'd this objection. "They think," (says he, speaking of the Greek churches) "that command of St. Paul, *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat, &c.* so to be understood, as not to exclude such as are by their age incapable of examining themselves, from partaking: But only to oblige all that are capable. As that like command of his, *If any one will not work, let him have nothing given him to eat*, must be so limited to such as are able to work, as that infants, and such as are not capable to work, must have victuals given to them, tho' they do not work.

rol. III.

Serm. VII.  
p. 292.

2. I deny that this objection goes upon the true sense of the text. I would not be misunderstood here, as tho' I intended to discourage persons examining themselves, which I think to be of singular advantage to christians, and very proper to make their lives regular and comfortable. Archbishop Tillotson's words don't much displease me. "Because the examination of our selves is a thing so very useful, and the time which men are wont to set apart for their preparation for the sacrament is so advantageous an opportunity for the practice of it; therefore I cannot but very much commend those who take this occasion to search and try their ways, and to call themselves to a more solemn account of their actions: Because this

“ ought to be done some time, and I know no fit-  
 “ ter time for it than this.” The oftner men search  
 their hearts and try their ways the better ; but I  
 cannot think that a strict and set examination of  
 our selves can be proved from the apostle’s words  
 to be more necessary for our receiving the Lord’s  
 supper, than for the performing other duties.  
 The placing religion in such a previous prepara-  
 tion for the Lord’s supper only, seems to me a  
 mistake. But I shall chuse to borrow the same ex-  
 cellent person’s words to express my sense of this  
 matter. “ Some pious persons do perhaps err on *Ibid. p. 289.*  
 “ the stricter hand, and are a little too superstiti-  
 “ ous on that side ; insomuch that unless they can  
 “ gain so much time to set apart for a solemn pre-  
 “ paration, they will refrain from the sacrament at  
 “ that time ; tho’ otherwise they be habitually pre-  
 “ pared. — For when all is done, the best prepa-  
 “ ration for the sacrament, is the general care and  
 “ endeavour of a good life. And he that is thus  
 “ prepared, may receive at any time when oppor-  
 “ tunity is offered, tho’ he had no particular fore-  
 “ sight of that opportunity. — And indeed we  
 “ cannot imagine, that the primitive christians,  
 “ who received the sacrament so frequently, that  
 “ for ought appears to the contrary they judged it  
 “ as essential and necessary a part of their public  
 “ worship as any other part of it whatsoever, even  
 “ as their hymns and prayers, and reading and in-  
 “ terpreting the word of God : I say, we cannot  
 “ well conceive how they who celebrated it so con-  
 “ stantly, could allot any more time for a solemn  
 “ preparation for it, than they did for any other  
 “ part of divine worship : And consequently, that  
 “ the apostle, when he bids the *Corinthians* examine  
 “ themselves, could mean no more than that consi-  
 “ dering the nature and ends of this institution they  
 “ should come to it with great reverence ; and re-  
 “ flecting

“flecting upon their former miscarriages in this  
 “matter, should be careful upon his admonition to  
 “avoid them for the future, and to amend what had  
 “been amiss: Which to do, requires rather resolu-  
 “tion and care than any long time of preparation.

The ambiguity of the *English* word *so* in our translation, has led many persons into a mistake of the meaning of that verse. The *Greek* word *ἕτως*, to which it answers, signifies *in this manner*, that is *agreeably to this institution which I have now related to you*: But it does not signify *then*, or *after that*; nor is it generally used in that sense. Had the apostle intended that sense, he would not have used the word *ἕτως*, but *τότε*, or some such like. To give an instance:

Gal. vi. 4. *Let every man δοκιμαζέτω prove his own work, καὶ τότε, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone and not in another.*

It will not be easy for those who understand the apostle's words as they are commonly explained, to give a good account of the connexion of his discourse. *Chrysostom* indeed appears to have thought the *ἕτως* signified the same as *τότε*, and therefore in his comment has so express'd it. \* “Let every one  
 “examine himself, and then let him come.” But then 'tis observable, he was sensible this was foreign to the apostle's argument, and therefore thus begins his comment upon it; † “What do these words  
 “mean, since he is upon a different argument?

I am sensible, some may be ready to suspect this interpretation arises from a prejudice in me in favour of my own hypothesis. But I hope very fully to clear my self of all such suspicion, by letting the reader know that this sense has been fixed upon by the ingenious Mr. *Lock*, who look'd further into the

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\* *Δοκιμαζέτω ὁ ἑαυτὸν ἕκαστος, καὶ τότε μεροῖται.* Chrys. Hom. XXVIII. in 1 Cor.

† *Τί βέλεται ταῦτα τὰ ῥήματα, ἐτέρως ὑποδέσεως ἢ περιλαμβανόμενης ἕως;* Ibid.



connexion of those epistles upon which he has given us comments, than perhaps any man ever did before; and yet he did it without a design of favouring this or any other hypothesis, for ought I can see. I am sure I never could observe any thing in his writings, that made me suspect he was for infant communion. And he has so fully explain'd the apostle's meaning, that I shall content my self with giving the reader his own words.

Thus then he paraphrases the verse: " By this institution therefore of Christ, let a man examine himself, and according to that let him eat of this bread, and drink of this cup." And in his marginal notes he gives his reasons for the sense he puts upon the apostle's words. " St. Paul, says he, as we have observ'd, tells the *Corinthians*, ver. 20. That to eat it after the manner they did, was not to eat the Lord's supper. He tells them also, ver. 29. That to eat it without a due and direct imitating" [these two last words should make this one, *discriminating*] " regard had to the Lord's body (for so he calls the sacramental bread and wine, as our Saviour did in the institution) by separating the bread and wine from the common use of eating and drinking for hunger and thirst, was to eat unworthily. To remedy their disorders herein, he sets before them Christ's own institution of this sacrament; that in it they might see the manner and end of its institution, and by that every one might examine his own comportment herein, whether it were conformable to that institution, and suited to that end. In the account he gives of Christ's institution, we may observe that he particularly remarks to them, that this eating and drinking was no part of common eating and drinking for hunger and thirst, but was instituted in a very solemn manner, after they had supped, and for another end, viz. to represent Christ's body

" and

“ and blood, and to be eaten and drunk in remem-  
 “ brance of him, or as *St. Paul* expounds it, to shew  
 “ forth his death. Another thing which they might  
 “ observe in the institution was, that this was done  
 “ by all who were present united together in one  
 “ company at the same time. All which put toge-  
 “ ther, shews us what the examination here propo-  
 “ sed is. For the design of the apostle here being  
 “ to reform what he found fault with in their cele-  
 “ brating the Lord’s supper, ’tis by that alone we  
 “ must understand the directions he gives them  
 “ about it, if we will suppose he talked pertinently  
 “ to this captious and touchy people, whom he  
 “ was very desirous to reduce from those irregula-  
 “ rities they were run into in this matter as well as  
 “ several others. And if the account of Christ’s in-  
 “ stitution be not for the examining their carriage  
 “ by it, and adjusting it to it, to what purpose is  
 “ it here? The examination therefore proposed  
 “ was no other but an examination of their manner  
 “ of eating the Lord’s supper by Christ’s instituti-  
 “ on, to see how their behaviour therein comport-  
 “ ed with the institution, and the end for which it  
 “ was instituted.

And again upon those words, *καὶ ὑμεῖς* he gives us  
 this note: “ These words as to the letter are right-  
 “ ly translated, *and so*. But that translation, I ima-  
 “ gine, leaves generally a wrong sense of the place  
 “ upon the mind of an *English* reader. For in ordi-  
 “ nary speaking, these words, *Let a man examine*  
 “ *himself and so let him eat*, are understood to import  
 “ the same sense with these, *Let a man examine him-*  
 “ *self and then let him eat*; as if they signified no  
 “ more, but that examination should precede, and  
 “ eating follow; which I take to be quite different  
 “ from the meaning of the apostle here, whose sense  
 “ the whole design of the context shews to be this:  
 “ *I here set before you the institution of Christ, by that*  
 “ *let*

“ let a man examine his carriage, *ἑαυτὸν*, and according to that let him eat ; let him conform the manner of his eating to that.

Now if this be the meaning of the place, it will not concern infants in the least. For they are not capable of any of those irregularities, about which the apostle would have men examine themselves. If any irregularity is committed in the administration, it must be wholly owing to others, and not properly be any act of their own. And all the world must see, we must have recourse to other places of the scripture in order to our being able to determine whether they have any right to partake of that ordinance, or no ; since nothing can be gather'd from this text one way or the other. And so I hope I have fully answer'd this objection against the practice I plead for.

III. Some will urge that children ought not to receive the Lord's supper, because they are not able to discern the Lord's body, as all communicants ought to do, according to the determination of the apostle : *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.* 1 Cor. xi. 29.

I might here answer as before, that this concerns the adult, and requires that such as are capable of doing it should discern the Lord's body, when they partake of his supper. And the reader may here apply the instances which have been already alleg'd to shew the reasonableness of allowing such kind of interpretations. But not to insist upon that ; I observe St. Paul is in this place speaking against the corruptions which were crept in among the *Corinthians* in this ordinance. The things he blames them for, are their uncharitableness and intemperance ; that they used to eat and drink in separate companies without tarrying for one another ; that they received the elements as they would common bread and wine for the satisfying their hunger and thirst, and mixed the Lord's supper with their own, and while one was

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hunger



1 Cor. xi.  
20.

hungry, another had eat and drank too much. These disorders among them were so scandalously bad, that he tells them, *This was not to eat the Lord's supper*, that hereby they quite alter'd the nature of the action, and so must rather be thought to take an ordinary and common meal, than to celebrate that sacred religious feast which Christ had instituted. This now is the fault and unworthiness in receiving which he refers to in the verse alleg'd in the objection; they did not *discern*, or as it should rather be render'd, they did not *discriminate* the signs and tokens of *the Lord's body*, or *put a difference* between them and their ordinary and common food.

Now supposing children used to communicate in the church of *Corinth*, these disorders could not be at all owing to them; and the apostle must be here understood only to blame those who were the causes of them. And when the Lord's supper is received as a sacred and not a common meal, in due order by the whole church or in one common society, this disorder he complains of is rectified. Nor would childrens partaking of a feast at all hinder its being a sacred and religious one in the sense of all the world, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, at that time. And when their disorders were redress'd, the bread in the Lord's supper would be given to children, not as common bread, but as the body of the Lord; and when children are made to eat and drink upon a religious account, and not to satisfy their hunger and thirst; the Lord's body is duly discriminated or discerned from common food, and as much as the thing will bear.

And certainly as christians are to put a difference between the sacramental, and common bread and wine, so they are between the baptismal and common washing, and if an incapacity to make such a difference will exclude infants from the Lord's supper, it may also from baptism. I think *Chrysostom* has with good reason parallel'd these, where he is  
shew-

shewing how differently an infidel and a christian are affected with the christian mysteries. \* “ When the infidel, says he, hears of baptism, he thinks of plain water ; but I consider not barely what is visible, but also the cleansing of the soul by the spirit : He thinks my body only is wash’d ; but I believe my soul is made clean and holy ; and consider the burial, the resurrection, the righteousness, the redemption, the adoption, the inheritance, the kingdom of heaven, and the gift of the spirit. For I don’t judge of the things that appear by my sight, but by the eyes of my mind. I hear of the body of Christ, I understand it one way and an infidel quite another.

Let me here further observe to the reader, that Dr. *Whitby* has explain’d the discerning the Lord’s body just in the same manner I have done, and in his note upon *Rom. xiv. 23.* he has proved by various examples this is the meaning of the word. And from Dr. *Pocock* he says : “ In the *Talmud* there is a distinction betwixt a man who eats the passover *לשם מצוה* in obedience to the command (which was that they should do it as a memorial of God’s passing over them when he destroy’d the *Egyptians*, by reason of the blood of the paschal lamb, *Exod. xii. 13, 14.*) and he that did thus eat it, was the just man that walketh in the ways of the Lord, mentioned *Hos. xiv. 9.* and betwixt another who did eat it only as common food, *i. e.* without respect

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\* Ἀκείων λεγέον ἐκείνου, ἀπλῶς ὕδωρ νομίζει, ἐγὼ ὅς τὸ ὁρώμενον ἀπλῶς βλέπω, ἀλλὰ τὸν τὴν ψυχῆς καθαρὸν τὸν διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος. Ἐκεῖνος λεγέσθαι μοι τὸ σῶμα νομίζει μόνον, ἐγὼ ὅς πεπίστευκα ὅτι καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ γέγονε καθαρὰ τε καὶ ἁγία. Καὶ λογίζομαι τὸν τάρον, τὴν ἀνάστασιν, τὸν ἁγιασμόν, τὴν δικαιοσύνην, τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, τὴν ὑποθεσίαν, τὴν κληρονομίαν, τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ ἐρχομένου, τοῦ πνεύματος τὴν χορηγίαν. Οὐ γὰρ τῇ ὀφει κείνω τὰ φαινόμενα, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς τὴν διανοίαν. Ἀκείω σῶμα χεῖρ, ἑτέρως ἐγὼ νοῶ τὸ εἰρημένον, ἑτέρως ὁ ἀπίς. Chrysost. Hom. VII. in 1 Cor.

“ to the commandment, or the ends of its instituti-  
 “ on ; and he is compared to *the transgressor* there  
 “ mentioned *that shall fall therein.*” So that as the  
 institution of the paschal supper made a vast difference  
 between it and a common supper, so ’tis evident the *Jews*  
 acknowledged that difference, and look’d upon all grown  
 persons who did not by their design in eating put such a  
 difference between that and an ordinary meal to be transgressors;  
 and yet they thought this very consistent with their admitting  
 children to partake of it ; and why the apostle may not be  
 supposed to be of the same mind with reference to the Lord’s  
 supper, I cannot imagine.

Obj. IV.

IV. It may be further objected, that children cannot do what the apostle supposes christians should at the Lord’s supper, and that is, shew forth Christ’s death. *For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.*

1 Cor. xi.  
 16.

Answer.

I answer ; These words come in immediately after the words of institution (and by the way are not, as I have found some ready to imagine, a part of the institution it self) and so here St. Paul comes to reason upon the institution, and to apply it to the argument he is upon, the reforming their disorders ;  
*q. d.* “ And since this institution in both the parts  
 “ of it has such an intire reference to Christ, since  
 “ it is such a commemoration of his sacrifice, it  
 “ must be esteem’d by all that know what you do,  
 “ not to be an ordinary and common meal, to satisfy  
 “ hunger and thirst ; but by this action you  
 “ proclaim the Lord’s death to the world.” Now as it was the action it self perform’d professedly by a body and society of men in commemoration of Christ’s death, and not the particular sentiments of each single person, that made this a shewing forth Christ’s death ; so infants as parts of that body or society, joining in that action, may be said with the rest to shew forth Christ’s death. I leave it to the

read-



reader here to parallel the circumstances of the pas-  
fover, which was in like manner a shewing forth  
the redemption of the *Israelites*. All that I shall fur-  
ther observe here, is that the ancients did not think  
this *shewing forth the Lord's death* was peculiar to the  
Lord's supper; they thought, and as far as I can  
see with good reason, that baptism was likewise a  
shewing forth Christ's death. \* "Therefore," says  
*Chrysostom* arguing against the *Marcionites*, "we  
" shew forth his death upon all occasions, in the  
" mysteries, in baptism and all the rest." And if  
*Chrysostom's* notion is true, this argument from in-  
fants incapacity to shew forth the Lord's death,  
must as well deprive them of baptism, as the Lord's  
supper.

I think these are the most material objections  
that can be alleg'd against this practice, which I  
must own seem to me not to be compar'd with the  
arguments I have produced on the other side the  
question. I have met with some other objections,  
which tho' they seem not to me of any great mo-  
ment, I shall take notice of, since some persons may  
perhaps think otherwise of them.

V. The ordinance of the Lord's supper is very *obj. v.*  
solemn; but if children should be admitted to com-  
municate therein, it might take off the respect due  
to it, and bring it into contempt.

Now here I grant the ordinance is solemn, and *Ans.*  
that it should be attended with an answerable solem-  
nity and seriousness of mind by all the adult; but as  
to the main of what is done there, 'tis no other than  
we do in our ordinary prayers, tho' it be done with  
the addition of awful circumstances. But to give a  
full answer to the objection, I say; the only questi-

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\* Διὰ τὸ τοῦ παντὸς καὶ τὸ θάνατον αὐτοῦ καταγγέλλομεν καὶ ἐν  
τοῖς μυστηρίοις, καὶ ἐν τῷ βαπτίσματι καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις ᾠπασι.  
*Chrysost. Hom. XLIV. in Matth.*

on here is, whether or no we have sufficient warrant in the holy scriptures for admitting children to communicate? For if we have, we need never fear, that we shall bring divine institutions into contempt by our keeping close to them. And why may it not be as well alleg'd, that the administering baptism to infants is the ready way to bring that sacrament, which is likewise a solemn ordinance, into contempt?

I fear this design of procuring a great veneration of the Lord's supper, has been prejudicial in some respects to the christian church. I cannot but think it has been an error, not only since transubstantiation was started, but even long before, that men depreciated other ordinances too much, while they were extravagantly zealous to add more solemnity to this. This not only made way for the excluding infants from it, but has occasion'd its being so seldom administred, and so little attended. Is it not, if we will speak impartially, a shame and a scandal, that it should in some places be administred only once a month, in others once in six weeks or two months, in others only three times, and in others only once in a year? How very different is this from the practice of the primitive church? They ordain'd, \* "That all the faithful who came to  
 " God's holy church, and heard the holy scriptures,  
 " but did not stay at the prayers and receive the  
 " sacrament, should, as making a disorder in the  
 " church, be suspended." And what is the consequence of the methods we take? A veneration is indeed procured for the sacrament, but 'tis a veneration that begets a dread and a neglect of it. And  
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\* Πάντας τὸς εἰσιόντας πρὸς εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν τῆ Θεοῦ ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ ἢ ἱερῶν γενομένων ἀκούοντας, μὴ παρεμμένοντας ὅ τῇ προσευχῇ καὶ τῇ ἁγίᾳ μετέληψαι, ὡς ἀν' αὐτῶν ἐμποδίζουσιν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἀφαιρῶντες αὐτοὺς. Can Apost. X.

certainly such a veneration does not well suit the gracious design of our Lord in instituting it.

VI. Will not this practice make the Lord's supper look like a charm, and encourage the popish doctrine of sacraments being effectual *ex opere operato*, without any regard had to the disposition of the receiver?

This can no otherwise be the consequence of children's receiving the Lord's supper, than 'tis of their receiving baptism. Sacraments are signs and tokens of God's covenant with his people; and since children are number'd by God among his people, what inconvenience can there be in supposing, that as these federal institutions were extended of old to children, they ought to be so still? Why may not children be allowed to have a right to them, till they come to forfeit it by a wicked life and conversation? Nay, what reason is there, why their being brought up in the use of this ordinance, may not be a good means to prevent their becoming profligate and ungodly? If it were indeed pretended, that the bare receiving the sacrament would justify persons who went on in wicked courses, there would be good reason for disliking such a pretence; but this is very far from my thoughts. Nor can any thing of this nature be inferr'd from childrens receiving the Lord's supper; since no wickedness can be charged upon them, and they do nothing to hinder their having benefit by the ordinance.

VII. The Lord's supper is an establishing ordinance, designed to confirm the grace that is already in a person, and not to work the first grace in him; and therefore not proper to be given to any before that work is begun in them, and consequently not to children.

Now in answer to this objection I would observe these following things.



1. This distinction which they allege is not borrowed from the scripture, but is owing to some mistakes men have run into of the apostle's meaning in those expressions, of persons *examining themselves* and *discerning the Lord's body*.

2. They who are very fond of this assertion have not been able to deny, there have been to their knowledge instances to the contrary, and have owned persons have received saving impressions at the Lord's supper, who had never received them before.

3. Let it be allowed, that the Lord's supper supposes some antecedent grace; this need not hinder childrens receiving it. For why may we not suppose this to be their case? Is there no grace given in baptism? Let this ordinance be an establishing ordinance. Is there any thing contradictory to that notion in letting children partake of it? I plead not for its being administred to any but such as are baptized. And if they need baptism, certainly they need establishment after baptism; and the Lord's supper according to this notion is appointed for that end.

4. It may be very much doubted, whether this objection, as understood by those who use it, is not built upon a great mistake. I confess it seems unreasonable to me to suppose that the Lord's supper has not a proper tendency to begin a good work in the heart. For if the setting forth Christ crucified in the preaching of the word is acknowledg'd by all to be a proper means of affecting mens minds, and of bringing them to repent, believe and obey the gospel; I cannot tell why the more lively representing the same Jesus Christ as crucified, by the visible signs and tokens which he himself has appointed, should be look'd upon to be no means at all for the accomplishing that end. In the Lord's supper Christ crucified is preached to the ear, ex-

hibited

hibited to the eye, nay, is so represented to us as to affect every one of our senses; whereas preaching affects the ear only. And is it reasonable to imagine that the mind is more like to be wrought upon by one single sense, than by the concurrence of all the senses?

But I easily foresee another objection will naturally arise from what I have now advanced.

VIII, If you allow such virtue and usefulness to *Obj. VIII.* the Lord's supper, why should not heathens and excommunicated persons be admitted to partake of it? Why may it not be hoped, that the setting Christ crucified before them with such advantage, may have that effect upon them which the preaching of him has not?

The answer to this objection may be easily gathered *Answer.* from what has been said already. The worshipping God as a father in Christ, is the peculiar privilege of the christian church, and so belongs not to those who keep out of that society, and were never yet enter'd into it by baptism. They are therefore unqualified, not for the having Christ crucified set before them, but for joining with the church in that address which is always supposed to be made to God in their prayers, and particularly those made by all christians at the Lord's supper. And the same is the case of persons who are justly excommunicated for their wickedness: They are cast out of the society, lose their former right to the privileges thereof, and become to it as heathen men and publicans.

These are all the objections against infant communion, which my little acquaintance with men or books, or my own invention, has been able to help me to. I own I cannot perceive half the evidence in them that I do in the contrary arguments. I am sure I have not purposely conceal'd any thing  
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wherein I apprehended their strength lay. But 'tis very possible others may set them forth more to advantage. And though in managing an argument, and especially when it seems clear to a person, 'tis hard to avoid expressions which seem to be positive; yet I would still make a reserve for the hearing what may be said against my plea, and forbear coming to any settled determination, till I see all that can be said against this ancient practice. And now I will proceed to the last part of the task I have undertaken.







## PART IV.

### *The Advantages of Infant-Communion.*

HAVING given the reasons which seem to me to warrant our reviving this practice, and answer'd the objections which are made against it, the only thing which remains, is to represent the *advantages* which may be thought would attend the reviving of it. And,

1. It may be reckon'd no small advantage in this case, that we shall become more consistent with our selves in maintaining infants church-membership and right to baptism. The *antipedobaptists* hardly say any thing more plausibly upon this head, than when they argue from our own proceedings, and ask us why we don't administer the Lord's supper to infants, as well as baptism? By our retaining the custom of the church of *Rome* in taking away the eucharist from children, notwithstanding we have laid aside the doctrine of transubstantiation which was the occasion of it, we have laid a stumbling block, I fear, in the way of some. And 'tis very possible when that is removed out of their way, and the reasons for giving infants the other sacrament are more thoroughly consider'd, they may be the more ready to fall in with us in our notion of infants right to baptism.

2. The reviving this ancient practice of giving the eucharist to children will probably be attended with this advantage, that it will ease abundance of honest pious souls of many perplexing fears and

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scruples

scruples about this sacrament. Certainly if we fairly and impartially consider things, we must be sensible, that many great and good men have run this matter too high, and unhappily led people into an excessive and superstitious veneration of the sacrament, as though it were a privilege above christians of ordinary attainments. I must for my own part confess, I cannot digest many expressions which have been used on this subject by those whom I highly value. Such a high pitch of holiness and satisfaction concerning a man's state, has been made necessary for an habitual preparation for receiving the Lord's supper, and so greatly has the work of self examination and an actual preparation been magnified, that it cannot be strange many persons have conceived the utmost dread of the ordinance it self. And though I very much esteem many pieces published upon this subject, and am sensible they contain very excellent matter in them; yet I hope I may without offence say, I wish a great deal of it were published in another manner. For when books are endlessly multiplied, and spun out to a great length, only to direct men in preparing for the sacrament; this alone encourages the prejudice, which men have too much received, that 'tis a very hard and difficult matter for persons to be qualified to such a degree as that it should be lawful for them, and their duty to come to the Lord's table: And which is worse, it too much abates their concern about their preparation for, and behaviour in other duties. They are easy about other duties, while they don't meddle with this, which they think is above them, and is the only one that necessarily requires so much care and caution to be used by christians in performing it.

Certainly if men were to set themselves to make the same improvement of some expressions concerning other duties, that has been made of a *man's examining*

amining himself, &c. they might very much discourage them also. I have already had occasion to mention some texts to this purpose, and shall not repeat them. I will only add to them these concerning prayer: *If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my prayer: I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting: Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you: Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double minded: The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: But the prayer of the upright is his delight.*

<sup>Psalme</sup>  
<sup>lxvi. 18.</sup>

<sup>1 Tim. ii.</sup>  
<sup>8.</sup>

<sup>Jam. iv. 8.</sup>

<sup>Prov. xv. 8.</sup>

I mention these texts, which may as plausibly be urged to discourage prayer, as some others are to discourage communicating in the Lord's supper, to shew how necessary it is for men to abate of their rigid notion concerning preparation for this ordinance, and the danger of receiving without such preparation.

Now the frightfulness of the ordinance would be considerably lessen'd, should it become the custom to give the elements to children, and if persons were from their infancy to be brought up in an attendance upon it. And how much more easy and pleasant would many sincere and honest souls then be in coming to the table of our Lord!

3. The consequence of this would be, that our communions would then be much fuller than they are. For beside the addition of the young communicants, if the adult were freed from their discouragements, they would be more free to come, and we should not so often miss their company. And this, I hope, would be no disadvantage, provided it appear that the persons who come are such as Christ has warranted his church to receive. For I doubt not he is willing, according to the parable, that his house should be filled with such.

<sup>Luke xiv.</sup>

<sup>23.</sup>

4. This



4. This would go a great way toward the removing an inveterate evil custom of having the Lord's supper so rarely administred, and the restoring the ancient practice of christians attending it constantly every Lord's day. St. *Luke* mentions this as the principal end of christians meeting together on that day. *And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them.* And the same was the practice of the primitive christians after the apostles times. Nothing can be more expresse to this purpose, than the testimony of *Justin Martyr*, who gives us this account of their worship: \* "On the day called *Sunday*, all that live in cities, or in the country, come together into one place, and the writings of the apostles or prophets are read, according as time will suffer. Then when the reader has done, the president in a discourse instructs and exhorts us to an imitation of those good things. Then we all rise up together, and offer up prayers, and as we said before, when we have done prayer, bread and wine and water are brought;" and then he proceeds concerning the Lord's supper. And no doubt this was the *set day* of which † *Pliny* speaks, whereon he tells *Trajan*, "Christians used to meet together to bind themselves with an oath  
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\* Καὶ τῇ τῷ ἡλίου λεγομένη ἡμέρᾳ πάντων χριστιανῶν ἢ ἀγροῦς μενόντων ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ συνέλευσις γίνεται, καὶ τὰ ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν ἀποστόλων, ἢ τὰ συγγράμματα τῶν προφητῶν ἀναγινώσκονται μέχρι ἐγχορῆ. Ἐπειτα παυσάμενοι τὰ ἀναγινώσκοντες, ὁ πρεσβυτέρως διὰ λόγου τὴν νεότητάν καὶ πειρασμοὺς τῶν καλῶν τέτων μιμήσεως ποιεῖται. Ἐπειτα ἀνιστάμεθα κοινῇ πάντες, καὶ διχῶς πρέμμεται. Καὶ ὡς προέφηται, παυσανδρῶν ἡμεῖς τὸ διχῶς, ἀρῶν προσφέρεται καὶ οἶνον, καὶ ὕδωρ. *Justin. Mart. Apol. 2. in fine.*

† Quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem: seque sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent. *Plin. Epist. XCVII.*

“ [or, the sacrament] not to the commission of any wickedness, but that they would not be guilty of theft, robbery, or adultery, &c.” This practice continued in the church, and we never find any where that the eucharist was not administered every Lord’s day, though in many places it was much oftner. Thus St. *Austin* tells us: † “ In some places the eucharist was administered every day, in others only on Saturday and the Lord’s day, in others only on the Lord’s day.” But mentions nothing of its being any where omitted on that day. A multitude of testimonies might be produced to prove this; but ’tis not needful, because all that know any thing of the primitive church are fully convinced of it. In the fourth and following centuries a superstitious magnifying the sacrament, brought in a neglect of it. And then though the practice of administering it constantly every Lord’s day continued, yet the people became very remiss in attending upon it. Hence in the sermons of St. *Chrysostom*, who perhaps said as much as any at that time to magnify the sacrament, and make people afraid of receiving it, we meet with several sharp reproofs of those who frequently withdrew at the administration of the eucharist, and used to receive only at the solemn feasts, when there was a great number of communicants. This neglect seems to have been more especially in the churches of the east, since we find an uncertain author, who lived after that time, reproaches them especially with it. \* “ If, says he, this be daily bread, why dost thou receive

*Vid. Chrysost. Hom. XXVIII. in 1 Cor. & Hom. III. in Ephes.*

† Alibi nullus dies intermittitur, quo non offeratur, alibi sabbato tantum & Dominico, alibi tantum Dominico. *August. Epist. CXVIII. ad Januar. p. 212.*

\* Si quotidianus est panis, cur post annum illum sumis, quem admodum Graeci in oriente facere consueverunt? *Auct. tract. de sacram. Ambrosio adscripti. Lib. V. c. 4. p. 1252.*

“ receive it once a year, as the *Greeks* in the east “ are wont to do? ” The notion of the sacrament being a sacrifice both for the living and the dead, made men hope for benefit by it without receiving it. And the doctrine of transubstantiation raised mens thoughts of it, and superstitious veneration for it, to the utmost height. Some perhaps might likewise take advantage to be indifferent to the receiving one half of the sacrament, when they observed the church of *Rome* had wholly taken from them the other. But especially we may think persons became more backward to the receiving this sacrament, when auricular confession and a priestly absolution thereupon were made necessary qualifications of communicants. From such causes it came to pass that in the church of *Rome*, for a good while before the reformation, the priests consecrated the elements continually, but the people did not communicate, except upon high days.

Our reformers seem to have been guilty of a considerable oversight, that they laid aside the solitary or private masses without appointing publick communions every Lord's day in the room of them. The fault in the church of *Rome* was not in the frequency of the consecration of the elements, but in the priests eating and drinking all himself after the consecration. I humbly conceive therefore it would have been much more prudent in them to have retain'd the former, and only to have laid aside the latter. At this day the greatest hindrance to the restoring of the primitive practice seems to be partly the want of the primitive zeal and piety, and partly the frightful notion people have entertain'd of this ordinance. The giving the Lord's supper to children will certainly abate the latter of these, and so dispose men to the more frequent communicating at the Lord's table : And it may be reasonably hoped, that when we become more like the  
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primitive christians in our frequent and constant use of the same means they used, we shall likewise grow more like them in their zeal and piety.

5. If the arguments I have used are a proof of our being warranted by God to admit children to the Lord's table, the reviving that good, but antiquated practice, will unquestionably be a means of making good impressions upon children in their early days, and may give us hopes that the rising generation will be considerably mended. I grant this wholly depends upon the design of the institution: For if the practice has no foundation therein, a wrong application of God's ordinance is not like to answer any good end. But then on the other hand, it deserves serious consideration, whether this practice has not a foundation therein: For if it has, 'twill no doubt be of great service to children. Indeed the nature of the thing seems to promise usefulness. Children will be more likely to have a sense of their baptismal bonds and engagements, when from their infancy they are brought up in the renewal of them; and are taught to be the obedient servants and disciples of the blessed Jesus, as they are taught other things, by such a frequent practising one of his institutions. Nor can I perceive any reason why this may not have a great influence upon them as well as public or private instructions and prayers. I have with much concern and trouble taken notice of the great degeneracy of children, which seems more and more to increase upon us, and for ought I see, is like to do so, unless some new course be speedily taken to prevent it. There is without doubt a great defect in particular persons, parents and masters, in the education of youth: But the corruption is so epidemical, that I am persuaded that is not the only defect. There seems to be some more general cause; and if I did

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not believe this *essay* had hit upon such an one, the world should not be troubled with it. I hope the observation of the great corruption of youth, which all true lovers of piety must make in our day with much grief, will make them cautious how they hastily reject what is suggested with a sincere aim at the cure thereof. I cannot think gross infidelity and looseness of morals would have made those advances they have done among us, had not this ancient practice been laid aside: And I should hope the reviving it would give a seasonable check to these growing evils. For,

6. This practice would bring young persons more under discipline, and give the rulers of the church a greater advantage for dealing with them. 'Tis I fear a truth, and if it be, I am sure 'tis to us a most scandalous one, that we ordinarily let children into the church by baptism, and then leave them to shift for themselves. We act as though we thought we had very little concern with them any further, till they come and voluntarily offer themselves to receive the Lord's supper; except it be that we preach to them, pray with them, and catechize them, if their parents or masters bring them, or they please to come of their own accord for that purpose; which is no more than many would do by any unbaptized heathen in the like case. I have long thought there is somewhat unaccountable in the conduct of all the *pedobaptists* in the nation toward children. The *church* of *England* indeed admits them to a communion in her prayers upon a right foot, that is, as members of the church by baptism. But I can't find, she requires their coming to the Lord's table, before they are sixteen years old; nor have they any discipline, that I know of, to exercise upon them till they come to that age. The *independents*

dents pretend not to have any authority over them, or any right to call them to an account, or inflict any censure upon them for their miscarriages, till they are grown up and admitted into their churches, and are in full communion with them. The *English presbyterians* seem to have fallen very much into the same notion and practice. Now this seems to me utterly unaccountable. If children are by baptism enter'd into the christian church, as the members thereof; they must certainly, as such, be subject to that rule and government which Christ has appointed in his church; and the rulers of the church must have a right to exercise a discipline in their case, and to proceed against them, when they give offence, as well as any other members whatever. 'Tis absurd to say, they are members of the society, and yet not subject to the laws of it.

I would not here be misunderstood, as though I meant any other than a spiritual discipline. I am satisfied that is the only one, with which Christ has intrusted the governors of his church. I don't think children are to have any corporal punishments inflicted on them by the church: The doing that belongs to parents, masters, or magistrates. But certainly some way or other there must be for the church to deal with them, and punish them, when admonition and reproof will not prevail: And what way can that be? Our excluding them from the Lord's supper has in a manner extirpated the very notion of any discipline that relates to them. For indeed what handle have we now to proceed against children as they grow up, and become loose and profligate? If we inflict an ecclesiastical punishment upon them; what can that be, but the depriving them of some ecclesiastical privilege? But what privilege can many of



us now deprive them of, when we don't allow them a communion with us at the Lord's table, and allow all others a communion with us in every thing else?

7. The reviving this practice will give the governors of the church a greater advantage for dealing with parents about the education of their children. They will find a necessity of concerning themselves in this very important affair, when children are brought up from their infancy in the full communion of the church.

8. This will make parents and masters more careful about the education of children, to keep them in good order, and to bring them up agreeably to that profession which children are taught from their infancy to make; and especially will they be careful to do this, when they find both they and their children will otherwise incur an ecclesiastical censure.

9. The reviving this ancient practice may be a means of reviving a more orderly discipline in the church. The decay of discipline is universally own'd and lamented: But we seem to be at a loss how to revive it, and where we should begin. Were there but once a good beginning made, 'tis probable enough we should with good success carry on the work. Now if there be sufficient reason for the ancient custom I have recommended, I can't think what more advantageous opportunity we can have to make a beginning, than by reviving that among us. This may the more easily be done, because it not being the subject of any party quarrel, there will be no need of one side condescending and yielding to another. And if once this practice is set up, it must unavoidably lead us further. Such a latitude in admitting persons to the Lord's table, must necessitate a great  
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strictness in discipline; and a very watchful eye over the communicants. A long disuse may occasion our being at a loss how to order our selves in reviving this usage; but that it is practicable the ancient church for many ages together is witness; and if it appear to be reasonable, the difficulties of reducing it to practice will be only at first, and will wear off every day more and more.

10. I am apt to think the attempting to restore this practice might be a good means of healing our divisions and lessening parties among us. I could say much on this head, but purposely avoid it; because I would, as I have all along through this *essay*, keep clear of meddling with parties, any further than as they all in common appear to be against that particular I am pleading for. Every man's own thoughts will easily suggest enough to him on this head. I shall therefore forbear adding any more about it, or concerning other advantages which I conceive would attend the reviving this practice, but which it may not be so proper upon some accounts to mention.

I am sensible how hard a matter 'tis to alter settled customs, and especially in such a thing as this. And yet I would not willingly lose all my labour, and therefore will suggest here to young people one use I would have them make of what I have said.

You see what pains I have taken to plead your cause, and assert your right, and what an earnest desire I have of your being allowed full communion with the church of Christ, and that you should be brought up therein from your very infancy. And now 'tis my earnest request to you, that you would not be indifferent to your own privilege, but be forward in claiming it, and as soon as may be,

be, while the present method is taken, come to the Lord's table, make conscience of doing it early, and of embracing all opportunities of attending on it. I am confident your kind and gracious redeemer, who took such a pleasure in having little ones brought to him, and in blessing them, would be well pleased to see more young ones about his table; and that his ministers should shew more care of his lambs, as well as of his sheep. You may easily see there is nothing frightful in this ordinance to discourage your attendance on it. And you know you cannot approve your selves the sincere disciples and followers of the blessed Jesus, while you wilfully neglect such a plain institution of his. Let me therefore intreat you not to be dilatory in this affair, choose to be as early as you can be allowed, according to the present prevailing notions, in putting your selves voluntarily under those bonds which your baptism has truly laid upon you, and which I think you ought to have been accustom'd to renew from time to time ever since.

I have now finish'd what I intended in this *essay*, for which I may, perhaps, meet with a large share of obloquy and reproach, as being the first person who have ventur'd to plead for the reviving this practice among us. But as I am sure I herein discharge a good conscience, so I hope I am armed with patience for every thing of that kind. I shall close all with repeating my protestation, that I have no design in this of increasing our fewds and divisions. As I am heartily sorry for those already among us, so 'tis my fixed resolution, that if I find not that more can be said against this practice than what I yet apprehend, I will then satisfy my self with the honest declaration I have made of my mind,



mind, and, without making any disturbance about my opinion, wait till the providence of God shall dispose his church to a sense of their duty. For I hope I can truly say, I had *rather have a milstone* Luke xvii. *hanged about my neck and be cast into the sea, than that I should offend one of these little ones,* or be the author of any needless contentions and animosities in the church of Christ.

F I N I S.

